

A  
COLLECTION  
OF  
VALUABLE DOCUMENTS,

BEING

BIRNEY'S VINDICATION OF ABOLITIONISTS—PROTEST OF  
THE AMERICAN A. S. SOCIETY—TO THE PEOPLE OF  
THE UNITED STATES, OR, TO SUCH AMERICANS  
AS VALUE THEIR RIGHTS—LETTER FROM THE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE N. Y.  
A. S. SOCIETY, TO THE EXEC. COM.  
OF THE OHIO STATE A. S. S.  
AT CINCINNATI—OUT-  
RAGE UPON SOUTH-  
ERN RIGHTS.

Goodell Anti-Slavery Collection No. 37

PRESENTED TO

OBERLIN COLLEGE

BY THE HEIRS OF

WILLIAM GOODELL.

E.

[The compiler of the following pieces desiring, from their excellency, to ensure to them an extensive circulation, and an easy reference, has thrown them into a pamphlet form. He forbears any further recommendation, desiring only to secure for them a careful perusal.]

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## J. G. BIRNEY'S LETTER—VINDICATION OF ABOLITIONISTS.

### PUBLIC MEETING IN ALABAMA.

At a large and respectable meeting of the citizens of Athens and Limestone county, according to previous notice, at the Court House on Tuesday, the 18th inst., on motion, Capt. Wm. Mason was called to the chair, and Francis H. Ford appointed Secretary. The object of the meeting was explained by Col. John W. Lane, at some length. On motion of Col. Lane, that a committee be appointed to draft a preamble and resolutions expressive of the views of the meeting, the following gentlemen were appointed :—Col. John W. Lane, Rev. Jeremiah Tucker, G. S. Houston, Esq., Mr. Ira E. Hobbs, Mr. Gabriel Smith, Mr. James Craig, Mr. Wm. T. Gamble, and David M. Crawford, Esq. The committee after retiring a short time, reported the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted :

Whereas, from the recent expulsion of blacklegs and gamblers from the adjoining states, and those who have no visible means, and follow no employment for support, but live upon the labor of others, filching from the thoughtless and unwary their hard earned savings, by acts that in their moral effects are no better than robbery ;

And, whereas, from recent developements of an organized band of abolition fanatics of the Northern states, headed in part by *Garrison, Tappan, Cox, Thompson, May,* and *JAMES G. BIRNEY*, of Kentucky, with others, whose

sole and avowed object is to sow the seed of discord, rapine, and murder among the slaves of the South. The boasted accession to the recently organized societies at the North. Their increased zeal, their accumulating means, and multiplying presses, teeming with the most slanderous and rancorous abuse of the slaveholding population of the South, thus encouraging insubordination and insurrection among our domestic circle, are acts looked upon with the greatest indignation by the community. What then remains for us? Shall we fold our arms and be still until the storm sweeps over us, and the earth shakes beneath us? No. We will declare to the world that we will defend our liberties, and our property, which the Constitution of our country has guaranteed to us; but having rights, and knowing them, *we shall dare maintain them.*

Therefore, Resolved, That a Committee of Vigilance, to consist of twenty, be appointed, a majority of whom shall have power to act, whose duty it shall be to take such measures and use such means as they may deem proper, in bringing to public view, and whipping all *blacklegs, gamblers, or other idle suspicious persons*, who may loiter or loiter about our town or county, without any visible means of support.

Resolved, That said committee use all energetic means in ferreting out and detecting any person or persons that may attempt to circulate among the community, any pamphlet, tract, or any seditious publication of any kind whatever; or tampering with slaves, with a view to excite insurrection; and upon proof of such fact, to inflict upon such person or persons *death*, which is the penalty of our statute for such offences, or such other punishment as they may think proper.

Resolved, That we recommend to the citizens of each Captain's Tent in the county, to appoint a Committee of Vigilance, whose duty it shall be to apprehend all suspicious persons who may be found in their respective neighborhoods, and bring them before the general Committee of Vigilance, at Athens, for examination.

Resolved, That we pledge the community our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honors, to sustain the course which may be pursued by the Committee of Vigilance, in pledge of which we subscribe our proper names.

Resolved, That the Secretary be requested to keep the resolutions open four weeks, to afford an opportunity for all to sign their names who desire so to do.

Resolved, That said committee shall have power to fill all vacancies which may accrue therein.

In virtue of the first resolution, the following gentlemen were appointed the Committee of Vigilance, to wit :

WILLIAM T. GAMBLE,	SILAS HINE,
JAMES CRAIG,	JOHN MAPLES,
JAMES M. COMAN,	ALEXANDER WORD,
SAMUEL TANNER,	IRA E. HOBBS,
GABRIEL SMITH,	JOHN R. EVANS,
GEORGE MALONE,	GEO. S. HOUSTON,
JEREMIAH TUCKER,	DANIEL COLEMAN,
DAVID M. CRAWFORD,	JOHN W. LANE,
BARTLEY COX,	WILLIAM MASON,
FRANCIS H. FORD,	LEKE MATTHEWS.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be signed by the Chairman and countersigned by the Secretary, and published in the Alabama Watchman.

WILLIAM MASON, Chairman.

FRANCIS H. FORD, Secretary.

[*Note.*—We are informed, that besides the Rev. Jeremiah Tucker, named above, a Baptist minister, six other members of the Vigilance Committee named, are professed members of the Christian family, viz : W. T. Gamble, Presbyterian, S. Tanner and J. R. Evans, Baptist, and B. Cox, S. Hine, D. Coleman, and W. Mason, Methodists.—*Ed. N. Y. Evangelist.*]

## MR. BIRNEY'S ANSWER.

CINCINNATI, DEC. 9, 1835.

GENTLEMEN,—A number of the Alabama Watchman, containing the foregoing account of the proceedings of a 'public meeting,' lately held in Athens, has reached me, enveloped as newspapers usually are, when sent by mail. An *extra* of that journal, containing a duplicate account of the same proceedings, carefully enclosed in a blank wrapper, sealed, and charged with a double rate of postage, (*unpaid*,) has also been sent to me and received. All this care, to convey speedy and authentic information of the notice you have been pleased to take of one who had little reason to expect *such* conspicuity as you have given him, it is to be presumed, has been exercised by your agency and direction. In this reply, which, after no hurried reflection, I have thought proper to make to your proceedings, I shall take up but little time in noticing what was done that is strictly personal to myself. I will stop only long enough to remind you—especially that portion of you who profess to be followers of Christ—of the *unjust* impression you have attempted to make on those to whom I am a stranger, by associating me, in your proceedings, with '*gamblers, blacklegs, and suspicious persons.*' It is well known to you all, that, with laborious diligence, I prosecuted in your county, and with no mean success, a profession, arduous in its duties, and, to a conscientious mind, beset with difficulties and temptations. To the generousness of my practice, the *bar* will testify, and, with *parties* and *witnesses*, bear record of my exemption from the petty tricks and advantages which bring the profession into disrepute. Knowing me, by an acquaintance of many years, as you did,—in my profession—as a mem-

ber of the church—as a citizen—you have tried to produce an impression, that you *knew* to be unjust and injurious. As Christians and as gentlemen,—now that you have had time for reflection,—you should be sorry for it, and ashamed of it.

I will not, by pleading your example, although it may be a full moiety of your number are, by profession, Christians, seek to justify the use of violent and denunciatory language. In you, the *first* use of such language is sufficiently unbecoming. For me to use it, after having witnessed, in this instance, its ugliness, would be wholly inexcusable. Banishing, then, every thing like ill will or resentment, I would reply to you ‘more in sorrow than in anger.’ I cannot but remember that there are among you those with whom I have passed many and pleasant years of professional intercourse—with whom I have had no other strife than intellectual and professional, and this so honorable, so courteous, and so kind, as in no degree to hinder our taking sweet counsel, and sitting often together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I am led to believe that the present is an occasion providentially offered for the promotion of some good end. As such, I will attempt to use it, for your benefit, for my own, and for that of our common country, to which my love is no less than yours.

No way presents itself in which I can more successfully accomplish a service of this kind, than by correcting some of the material errors into which you and other advocates of slavery have fallen, in relation to the character, object, means, &c., of those who are known by the name of *abolitionists*. If, now, you are at length emancipated from the dominion of those inflamed passions, by which it is evident, during your proceedings, you were held captive, and prepared to bring to the consideration of what I shall in truth and sincerity tell you, the calm and enlightened judgment, which I know was possessed in



former times by some of your committee, you will feel better, safer, happier, in the conviction that, so far from that portion of your brethren and fellow-citizens whom you have charged with trying to bring upon you the sudden consummation of the calamities to which they see you exposed, and which of themselves, if let alone, now for a long time linger not, their first wish is to avert them, to save you from their destruction, and make our united country in reality what poetry has feigned her to be,—

‘The land of the free and the home of the brave!’

1. *The character of the abolitionists.*—Although there are among them a considerable number of high-minded, just, and intelligent men, who are connected with no religious sect, yet the great majority are Christians by profession, and are found among the most active, zealous, and well-informed classes of the several churches to which they respectively belong. In England, they would fall under the contemptuous designation of ‘Methodists,’ the name by which the *working men* of all the churches there, both established and dissenting, are called, when spoken of by the irreligious part of the community, or by their more indolent and fashionable brethren. It is not meant that *all* belonging to the most zealous, active, and well-informed classes in their respective churches in this country, are abolitionists. By no means. Yet it is chiefly by drawing upon them, that the abolitionists have increased their numbers, from the mere handful of two years ago, to it may be 40,000, as stated in a meeting of Southern slaveholders, held recently in New York. It is a great mistake, to suppose that they have an over-proportion of youth. True it is, that many young men, buoyant with virtuous expectation, of the soundest hearts and most cultivated minds, are swelling their number and adding to their efficiency, and

that there are among them men venerable for age and wisdom, who have done the state and church much service, and who must soon, according to the ordinary course of nature, be called hence to their reward,—yet the great body is made up of men of middle age, possessing in their fullest vigor all their natural and mental powers. Those who are reposing on what they *have* done—whose fame is built on the foundation of things as they are now, and who, in the greatness of their alarm at the least moral agitation of the community, seem to forget that ‘God reigns,’ or who are too inert and too much at ease for renewed effort to seize on the land that yet remains to be possessed; such are rarely to be found in the busy and stirring ranks of abolitionism.

Believing that, according to the promises of God, in the conversion of the world, and that his truth, wielded by human agency, is to be the great instrument to effect it, they have not been backward in giving their aid to every benevolent movement at all connected with this great object. For the support of foreign and domestic missions, for the largest distribution of the Bible, for Sunday schools, for the tract and education causes, and for the establishment and endowment of colleges, especially where most needed, they have been liberal in their donations.

Advocating *principles*, and believing all that are truly such will, when faithfully developed and fully carried out into action, operate beneficially, abolitionists are thorough-going in favor of public moral reformation. Having abandoned the use of ardent spirits because they contained alcohol, and intoxicating in their effects, they refrain from every other drink that is alcoholic and that produces intoxication. Thus wine, cider, beer, and all the other *disguises* of alcoholic poison are excluded from their use. If I mistake

not, tobacco has generally shared the same fate. In my journey, last spring, through Ohio to the east, where I was brought in company with a large number of abolitionists, I remember but *one* who seemed to be in the habitual use of tobacco. Some of them, and by no means a few of the younger abolitionists, from considerations of health and economy, as well as other reasons, have relinquished the use of tea and coffee, substituting for them, in most cases, water or milk. To my surprise, at many houses whose hospitality I received, in addition to tea and coffee at breakfast and supper, a pitcher of pure water was regularly placed on the table, and, to my still greater surprise, more frequent use was made of it than of other liquids.

A large and growing number of them, by no means confined to the Friends, have embraced what are beginning to be known by the name of *peace principles*. These principles deny to nations the right of making war, either offensive or defensive, and to individuals the right of assaulting others in any case, or of defending their persons or property, if it must be done at the expense of the guilty trespasser's life. These, say they, are the principles of the gospel; in illustration of their beauty and excellency, they adduce the lives of the Saviour and his apostles.

As a class, they are diligent in the conduct and management of their ordinary business; and it is believed not to be too much to say for them, that they are somewhat distinguished for their good faith and punctuality in the discharge of pecuniary engagements. Opposed to theatres, expensive pomps and parade of every kind, such of them as are engaged in profitable pursuits would soon grow rich, were it not that they give so much of their money, as well as of their time and personal effort, to the benevolent causes which interest them.

In domestic life, it is believed they are not behind any

other description of our fellow-citizens, in the exemplariness of their demeanor, nor do they appreciate less highly than others the happiness which springs from its endearments.

*As church members.*—Notwithstanding the violent denunciations to which they have been subjected, even from their fellow-christians, because of their uncompromising advocacy of the cause of liberty as immediately connected with the poor, and perishing, and neglected among us; no instance, so far as it is known, is to be found where they have been brought under the discipline of their churches for unchristian and disorderly conduct.

*As citizens.*—They are not identified with any of the political parties into which the country is divided. So far from it, these parties seem desirous of commending themselves to popular favor, each by outstripping its adversaries in their abuse, misrepresentation, and persecution of abolitionists. In elections, they vote by no party mandate, but as they individually believe to be most expedient. In every point of contact with government, they have shown themselves obedient to the laws, and faithful in the discharge of their civil duties. They allege, and it is believed, truly, that in the prosecution of their object—the *emancipation of the enslaved of this land*, they have neither violated, nor intended to violate, any provision of the Constitution of the United States, or of the constitution or laws of any of the states. Of their yet having done so, or of their having written, up to this time, a single sentence which, even if the slaves of the South could read and had access to their writings, has any legitimate tendency to excite an insurgent spirit among the oppressed, they utterly deny, and demand other proof of it than is to be found in the furious clamor of slaveholders, who will not read their productions, or in the terror of mobs summon-

ed to the work of bloodshed and demolition by the '*dough faces*'\* of the North—panders to slaveholding avarice and passion—traitors to the wounded and almost expiring cause of liberty among themselves.

Last spring, I attended the Ohio Anti-Slavery Convention—was present at the several meetings of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York, and at the Anti-Slavery Convention held in Boston. On these several occasions, I became acquainted, and deliberated with, it may be, not less than one thousand persons, who may be fairly set down as among the most intelligent of the abolitionists. Subjects on which the most diverse opinions were entertained, and which to ambitious and untrained minds would be agitating and dissentious in the extreme, were discussed with the most calm and unruffled composure. And whilst some of the leading journals were teeming with the foulest and the falsest charges of moral and political turpitude, whilst there were produced in their assemblies, placards, calling on the mob for appropriate deeds, and designating the time and place of holding their meetings, that its violence might know at what point it might most effectually spend itself; yet not elsewhere have I seen so much of sedate deliberation, of sober conclusion, of dignified moderation, sanctified by earnest prayer to God, not only for the oppressed, but for the oppressor of his fellow; not only for such as they loved, but for their slanderers, and persecutors, and enemies.

The above is a fair account, so far as my knowledge enables me to speak, of the character of those whom you are pleased to describe as '*a band of fanatical abolition-*

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\* This word is not used in any malice, but as the received and most convenient designation of that class of persons who, residing in free states, yet are the defenders of slavery.

ists.' Light and rash minds, unaccustomed to penetrate to the real causes of great revolutions in public sentiment, will, of course, think and speak contemptuously of them, whilst the philosophic observer clearly sees that such antagonists of error, armed with so powerful a weapon as the *truth*, must at all times be invincible, and that in the end they will be triumphant.

2. *Their object is the abolition of slavery in the United States.* This is expressed in the constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and is generally reiterated in the constitutions of auxiliary societies. I safely hazard the assertion, that in the multiplied publications of the American Anti-Slavery Society—in all the speeches, and addresses, and discussions of its agents and intelligent advocates, no other object is proposed, and this *only through the power of the truth applied to the understandings and consciences of slaveholders, to persuade them to do their duty.* Now, of me and the other gentlemen you have associated with me, you have published to the world that our '*sole object*' is 'to sow the seed of discord, rapine, and murder among the slaves of the south,' and you affirm, as witnesses who know the truth, that we have so '*AVOWED*' it. Knowing, as I do, that at the time you gave this testimony, there were no facts in existence to verify it, what now shall I say to you, as honorable men and as Christians, of your course? I will not retort the language of abuse and vilification; it is torn from my vocabulary. Can anything be said in extenuation more favorable, than that passion had usurped the seat of reason—banished memory from its station, and left you to the undisputed sway of a disordered imagination, busy in the creation of her guilty figments? or that you are disciples of the reigning system of ethics, which makes a false statement less criminal when it is asserted of many than of few—of those

we call our enemies, than of our friends, or of those who are persecuted, than of those who are popular? Elect your own scheme of palliation; still, as gentlemen and Christians, you owe it to the claims of honor and truth to furnish the evidence of your accusation, or with the magnanimity becoming both characters, acknowledge with contrition your shame for having preferred it.

The object, then, of the abolitionists, is to bring slavery in the United States to a termination. Now, by itself, independently of the means to be used,—which we will consider bye and bye,—it is a *good object*—one which I would not do you the injustice, for a moment, to suppose you would not heartily approve. I will not attribute to gentlemen of your respectability and intelligence, the slightest approximation to that *brutism* which could delight—because of its fitness and propriety—in seeing one race of men, year after year, generation after generation, century after century, increasing from tens to hundreds, from hundreds to thousands, from thousands to millions, performing unrequited toil, suffering bodily outrages and torments, and consigned to mental darkness and spiritual hopelessness, merely that another race might live in ease and indolence, and enjoy all the pleasures of despotic sway. Nor, will I suppose, if two strangers were to meet in a wilderness, and the stronger to reduce the weaker to the condition of a southern slave, that you would refuse to unite even with the veriest ‘fanatic’ in the land, in raising against such violence and abuse, the loudest note of condemnation; nor that any right *claimed* by the oppressor could receive the least confirmation, or the wrong of the sufferer be at all mitigated, by the wrong-doer’s pleading the habits of domination, and cruelty, and indulgence into which he and his family had fallen, from the long continuance of the relation his own outrage had set up. No,

gentlemen : in such a case, you would decide at once, and correctly too, that every moment's denial of the right was a continuance of the wrong, adding only aggravation to its intensity, and furnishing fresh reason for its termination.

Nor, do I believe, hateful as is the very name of abolitionists to slaveholders, that you would refuse to mingle your sympathies with theirs, for the oppressed of other lands. In all our south, the tyrant Nicholas had not a friend, while he was drenching his hands in the blood of his Polish subjects, goaded by oppression to revolt. No : the faintest ray of hope for their success in vindicating their liberty, warmed your every heart ; the clang of the Polish falchion on the invader's casque, made music delightful to your ears ; whilst for every blade that was raised by an arm that struck for liberty, your silent orisons went up, that it might descend with resistless energy upon the strongest of the oppressor's bands. Your prayers ascended not for the staying of the pestilence, that was sweeping off the thousands of the foe—and when, at last, after the struggle of despair, the son of Poland's hope went down in tears of blood, it was followed by your tears of sorrow—whilst in mournful sympathy with the poet, you exclaimed—

‘ Hope for a season bids the world farewell,  
And Freedom shrieked when Shrojemski fell.’

But stay—not so fast : Is it not ‘ *fanatical*,’ thus to suffer the honest feelings of your nature to go out for the oppressed—and is it not ‘ *incendiary*’ for you here, to reprobate the cruelty of the tyrant, or to commiserate the afflictions of such contemptible ‘ disturbers of the peace ?’ There are two sides to every question. You have not yet heard the high-souled and chivalrous Emperor's account of this matter. You have not heard from his own lips of



the great 'delicacy of the subject'—nor have you properly appreciated his 'peculiar circumstances.' To your furious zeal we may suppose him to reply, 'You have forgotten altogether, that however wrong might have been the dismemberment of Poland, and the *first* reduction of its inhabitants to political servitude, that, *now*, they had become accustomed to it—that they were exceedingly degraded\*—totally unqualified for liberty, many of them being Jews, who will neither amalgamate with Christians, nor Christians with them—that, therefore, they never can be free in their native land—the only way to elevate them to a proper sense and enjoyment of freedom, being either to transport them to the hospitable and healthy shores of Palestine, (which is impossible,) or for me to retain the power I now possess over them, using it of course with a merciful discretion, as I have always done, and solely for their good; making them, as it were, candidates for freedom, till, somehow or other, in the lapse of time, they may be inducted into its full fruition.' May it not be, too, you have overlooked that most manly and satisfactory of excuses for inveterate habits of oppression—that they were introduced by his very worthy autocratical ancestors, who, themselves being oppressors, had transmitted the fashion to their descendants, and now, without any agency of his, he had it '*entailed*' on him. Beside, may he not well have urged, that his power would be curtailed, his wealth diminished, and his princely ease broken in upon, by removing the weight of his oppression? And still more fiercely, that the oppressed were his '*property*'—that it was his own concern—that no other people knew anything about it, or had any interest in it—and that, if any cant-

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\* 'The peasantry are in a wretched condition, dirty, improvident, indolent, addicted to intoxication, and, of course, poor.'

ing sympathy for his subjects (contented and happy he knew they were, if meddlers would let them alone) should be felt and expressed any where ; or, if a misguided philanthropy should attempt to convince him, that in the stores of heaven there is laid up wrath for the oppressor—or that it is better, safer, happier, to be served by willing subjects than reluctant slaves ; or if his neighbors should permit any discussion of the wrongs of tyrants and the rights of men, he should regard it as a hostile interference with his own peculiar despotical interests, calling, at least, for a withdrawal of his friendship, if not for open war upon the guilty. Now, in what light would you look upon such pleas as this ? Now, I am sure, as the candid readers of an intelligent and honest mind, desiring to show mercy and do justice—but, rather, as the guilty subterfuges of a base, and selfish, and cowardly despot, who has the meanness to back with threats, his feigned excuses for practising an iniquity, he has not the magnanimity to forsake.

Thus far, you and the abolitionists ‘walk together,’ in admiring the beauty and comeliness of liberty. But at this point you separate. He *loves* her as a substantial good for himself, his neighbor, his country, the world : you admire her as good in the ‘abstract’—or, as having her habitation *at a distance*—in Ireland—in Poland—or in Greece. But let her blazing beacon begin to sweep over the Atlantic and approach our shores, and its warmth begin to be felt near your cotton-bales, your rice-tierces, and your sugar-hogsheads—let but

England's flag,—  
Proclaim that all around is free,  
From ‘faintest Ind’ to each blue crag,  
That beetles o’er the western sea ;—

and, oh, how fanatical ! how visionary ! how suicidal to her own interests, how destructive to those of the oppressed ! and how injurious to her neighbors !

Now, what a shame is this! Lovers of freedom, are ye?—and well content that her fires should blaze, and warm and purify *abroad*—whilst, at home, they must be extinguished, and your own house left desolate and dark! Lovers of liberty, are ye?—and yet, whilst the abolitionist is striving to uprear her fallen standard in our country, that all the world may see its broad folds, waving in the purest air of heaven, representing in letters of sunlight, that, *ALL MEN are entitled to LIBERTY*—with myrmidon hands you rush to seize, that you may consume it in the furnace of a sugar house, or bury it forever in the marshes of a rice-field.

The importance of the object is by no means diminished, when it is seen how rapidly slavery is insinuating itself into the very religion of the American church. Time was—and it ended but a little while ago—when slavery was deplored in the south, not only as an *evil* of large dimensions, but as a transgression of the great law of love, which, whilst it could not be justified, yet some palliation was found for it, in the peculiar circumstances of that portion of the country—and a hope often expressed, that, in some way or other, it might terminate. No section of the church was then found so besotted as to become its advocate and supporter on *principle*, and boldly take God's book of love as their warrant for holding their brethren in a bondage, unequalled for its enormities even among Mahomedans or Pagans of modern times; nor so reckless of all decent regard to their character, as to challenge the praise of men for the meliorated condition of the enslaved here, as to morals and physical comforts, above what it would have been had they remained in Africa; or to set off against their iniquity the few instances of conversion to Christ, by which God, in the greatness of his mercy, had chosen to exalt his name, and make it glorious, among

the down-trodden and perishing of a Christian land. Yet, all this has been done—not by a few ignorant and iron-hearted slave-driving professors of religion, but by the accredited organs of different churches in the south, claiming high stations on the scale of general intelligence, biblical knowledge and spiritual purity.

Now, I ask you, if to men zealous for the honor of God, and for the glory of his church, is it nothing which should rouse them to effort, to see *such* a system of ‘peace on earth and good will to men,’ menacing the whole land by its rapidly extending and darkening influence? Is it nothing that should animate them to holy, untiring action to see millions of their countrymen and fellow creatures in chains, in their midst—to know that each day their chains are becoming heavier and more galling; to witness generation succeeding generation, with minds sunk deeper in ignorance, and hearts in savagism—whilst from multitudes of them is forced the exclamation of hope beginning to despair, ‘How long, Lord!’ And shall all this exist, and its continuance be insisted on—shall it become indurated, and this too by the sanction of a church professing to be God’s, and by a people professing before Him and the world to have put on bowels of compassion, and to have the mind that was in Christ! and *none* be found to ‘cry aloud, to spare not, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show his people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins?’

I do not intend here to enter into any scriptural exegesis to prove to you that the form of oppression called slaveholding is sinful, awfully sinful before God, because it is the greatest wrong you can do to your neighbor. I know with what nimbleness you fly from the light of the *existing* dispensation to the comparative darkness of the *past*; and how, like the unhappy Gadarene possessed with an un-

clean spirit, you have made your dwelling among the tombs (of Abraham and Moses ;) and how always, night and day, you are cutting yourselves with stones, and crying out to every one who would draw you thence, 'Torment me not !' I will not pursue you thither ; but of you who profess to be Christians, I would ask and with no taunting or insulting purpose—Has the thing called slavery, *as you practice it*, (and I do not intend to say that in the treatment of your slaves you differ from your neighbors,) been found, at any time, propitious to your Christian growth, or to a closer walk with God ? Have you not, (especially the 'bishop' on your committee) on whipping a fellow being, to extract from him services which only slavery authorizes you to demand, had some misgivings that you are, what God has said you ought not to be, '*a striker* ?' When you wrest from him all the avails of his labor, except what will keep him in good condition to renew it, does it never occur to you that you are 'greedy of filthy lucre,' 'covetous ?' And when you are under the necessity, even though it be to maintain the discipline that slavery calls for, of cutting and slashing, by yourself or your overseer, some half a dozen of your poor and helpless brethren, whom, you say, God has committed to your care, does it never strike you as somewhat inconsistent with what he has told you by his messenger, 'The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men ?' Again : has it never once entered into your minds, whilst attending the marts for human flesh, established in your towns and villages, that the slaver who supplies them is but your agent ; and while he recounts to you his horrible adventures—of husbands without a moment's warning torn from the wives of their bosom, and loaded with chains and driven like cattle for a thousand miles, on the high-ways of this Christian land ; of the wife and mother, in the

phrenzy of separation, calling on heaven and earth to restore to her the husband and children of her love, and to blast the wretch who is tearing her from them forever; now standing before you in the stillness of despair, the tear, started by the memory of former joys, humble as they were, coursing its way down her worn and haggard cheeks? Have you seen this, and has not conscience, stifled and sepulchred as it has almost been, still wrung from you the silent acknowledgment, *this is my work?* When you are casting in your contributions to provide for the distribution of the Bible in foreign lands, what are your feelings on recollecting that you withhold it from your '*domestic circle*,' whose peace and quietness so much concern you? And does it cheer you, while praying for the heathen of distant climes, to have the idea rise up before your minds, that you are, as far as in you lies, maintaining here in your own country, at your own doors, in your own families, a system which in one month brings into being, rears and conducts to death, more heathen than than all christendom has reclaimed from their idols and their vices, by the efforts, the expenditures and the sacrifices of fifty years?

In the stillness of the evening, whilst your *white* family are assembled around God's altar, and are raising the song of praise or uniting in the prayer of faith, does the sound of the overseer's lash, or the distant cry of his victim suffering the penalty of an unexecuted task, infuse fervor into your petitions, or add richness to your symphonies? Or, when on the holy Sabbath, for the refreshment of your own souls, you frequent the place where God's honor dwelleth, does it add fuel to the fire of your devotions, to know that your twenty, fifty, or it may be, your one hundred slaves, worn down by the labors of the by-gone week, are dozing away their time in their hovels, or roaming over the country like vagabonds, with no one, not even those who

claim their guardianship by *providential allotment*, to care for their souls; and that there is not present *one* to receive with you the blessings of a time and place so hallowed? And when you are receiving the sacred emblems of Christ's body and blood, your souls banqueting at the table of his love; at one moment melted into tears at the recollection of his sufferings for *you*, at the next swelling out with the joys, unutterable yet irrepressible, of his great salvation, does it never rush like the sudden pang of death to *your* hopes, that you are joined hand in hand with oppressors who have power, deliberately, willfully, and this too, for the gold whose rust shall eat your flesh as fire, to withhold from your 'neighbors' around you all knowledge of that salvation, all participation in its hopes and all the exultation of its joys?

I know how this cancer on your minds affects the most conscientious among you. Therefore, of such I confidently ask, if the oppression of the colored race among you, *as you practise it*, is not an undying worm, gnawing, day and night, into the very core of your religious enjoyments: and if you do not find, however good and gentle when compared with others you may be, in the treatment of your slaves, that slavery, as it exists in your own 'domestic circle' day after day, and hour after hour, is distilling its odious and filthy poison into your otherwise pure and spiritual cup? And how can it be otherwise whilst (to use the eloquent language of another) you are making *men property*, God's image merchandize, sinking to the level of brutes beings ranked and registered by God a little lower than the angels, wresting from their rightful owners the legacies which their Maker has bequeathed them, inalienable birthright-endowments, exchanged for no equivalent, unsundered by volition and forfeited by crime—breaking open the sanctuary of human rights and

making its sacred things common plunder—driving to the shambles Jehovah's image herded with four-footed beasts and creeping things, and bartering for vile dust the purchase of a Redeemer's blood and the living members of his body? How can it be otherwise, whilst you are maintaining a system which derides the sanctity with which God invests the domestic relations, annihilates marriage, makes void parental authority, nullifies filial obligation, invites the violation of chastity by denying it legal protection, thus bidding God speed to lust as it riots at noon-day glorying in the immunities of law? Are you looking for the *great peace* that is promised to them *who love God's law*, whilst, in defiance of all the light God has given you, you maintain a system which stamps as a *crime* obedience to the command, 'Search the scriptures,' repeals the *law of love*, abrogates the 'golden rule,' exacts labor without recompense, authorizes the forcible sundering of kindred, and cuts off forever from the pursuit of happiness? Do you hope for the 'peace' which the Saviour left his followers, whilst you persist in a course which prohibits the acquisition of knowledge by the terror of penalties, eclipses intellect, stifles the native instincts of the heart, precipitates in death, damps the upward aspirations of the spirit, startles its victims with present perils, peoples the future with apprehended horrors, palsies the moral sense, whelms in despair, and 'kills the soul?'

If slavery is now despoiling you of your Christian peace and polluting your spiritual enjoyments; if it is rendering you not only inefficient, but by your example injurious, in the great work of evangelizing the world; if, in fine, it has so corrupted the church that she is beginning to receive as one of her dogmas, that the bitterest form of oppression known to the world may not be displeasing to God, or opposed to his word, it would seem almost useless



to look to any other quarter whatever for its *benefits*. But lest it should be supposed we would withhold what you might regard as benefits, we will bring into brief review such of them as may be called *political*—their connection with the great principles of our government, and the cause of universal freedom.

When we were in our utmost need, straining not only to produce united action among ourselves, but for the good opinion and sympathy of the world, we proclaimed as a truth fundamental to all governments, that ‘all men are created equal, and possess rights that are inalienable to their lives, their liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’ At this you have jeered—you have baptised it ‘a rhetorical flourish;’ you have ridiculed it, as well as the distinguished revolutionary statesman who first conceived and published it, and you have, from the time of its promulgation till now, *lived* down, and continue to live down, as much as in you lies, this great truth, without which our government is no longer worthy of a serious effort for its preservation.

What has slavery, acting through the south, done for the freedom of speech and of the press, those great conservatives of our government? I will tell you: She has used the refinements of metaphysics and the delusions of sophistry to explain away the obvious meaning of constitutional provisions enacted for their preservation; she has claimed for herself the peculiar favoritism of the Constitution of the United States; she has reared herself aloft on a bloody throne, demanding, with lash in hand, of states sovereign as herself, that all their rights should bow in submission to her and ‘do her reverence;’ that her dignity must be regarded as a thing too holy to be handled; and that these common rights of the people be restrained lest her sacred mysteries be profaned by men of ‘unclean

lips ;' and the secret things of her *penetralia* be exposed by freemen to the rude gaze of a vulgar world.

What has it done for the security of the citizens under the Constitution and laws of the land? You shall hear: She has *mocked* at Constitutions and laws; she has raised up tribunals unknown and opposed to them both; she has instituted inquisitions and invested them with power to execute punishments, not only of disgrace, but even unto death; she has set aside the trial by jury, and freemen of our country have been apprehended on suspicion, and without any charge of crime known to the laws, they have been shamefully treated; they have been ignominiously scourged, as slaves are scourged; and they have been executed on the boughs of your trees, whilst the once sacred appeal, '*I am an American citizen*,' has been drowned by the deafening shouts of a law-contemning rabble.

She has offered large rewards for the forcible and felonious abduction of some of the most worthy citizens of other States, for the exercise of rights guaranteed to them by the constitutions under which they live, and by her own also.

She has preferred indictments and had them returned *true bills*, against the citizens of other governments, who have never been within her jurisdiction; who are not bound on any principle, to possess a knowledge of her laws, merely, that she might have a pretence to get them into her power. You assert, they have violated your laws; yet you have offered no proof by the publication of a single statute. Until you do this, it is fearlessly affirmed that they have not violated a single statute of a southern state, for which they could be convicted by an honest and impartial court and jury.

The south allege, that the opposers of slavery excite their slaves to discontent and insurrection. You have had no insurrection of which you have condescended to give

the proof. It is confidently said, that you are unable, by evidence of a credible character, to connect any abolitionist with any actual or meditated insurrection, either by his personal agency, or by means of any anti-slavery publications. On the contrary, *you* have gone to the north, and by your personal agency, and your publications, have stirred up the disorderly and the lawless of the cities to repeated insurrections against the constitutions and laws of several of the states ; you have forcibly prevented the people from ‘ peaceably assembling,’ and discussing the propriety of ‘ petitioning the government for a redress of grievances ;’ you have violated the constitutional ‘ right of the people, to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects from unreasonable searches and seizures ;’ you have excited your instruments to war against associations of unoffending and respectable females ; to trample under their unhallowed feet, in the person of an American citizen, the most sacred immunities of law, and to shout their fierce triumphs over constitutional rights, and to celebrate their foul orgies in the face of day, and almost in the vestibule of the venerated ‘ cradle of liberty.’

But this is not all. You have threatened the north with a cessation of friendly intercourse—to bar out her teachers, and her ministers of religion ; to put in practice an intolerable system of individual espionage ; you have appealed to her avarice ; you have taunted her with meanness ; you have flouted her for her mercenary spirit, and have insultingly boasted, that sooner than lose the profits of your commerce, the factorage of your sugar hogsheads and your cotton bales, she would unite with you in the persecution of her own citizens, and readily surrender in the persons of abolitionists, rights, which *their* forefathers ‘ pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor ’ to defend.

More than this ; you have set up yourself on high, at in the tone of superiority, issued your mandate to the fr

states, that they touch not slavery in the District of Columbia, that they petition not their representatives in Congress to remove from the purlicue of the capitol this shame and dishonor of our nation; you demand, that the *Union* be surrendered into your power, to be eviscerated of all that is essential to its vitality, personal security, the right of assembling peaceably and petitioning for a redress of grievances, the freedom of the press and of speech, &c. &c., under the penalty of its destruction, should your demand be resisted.

All these things, so far as they were practicable, you have done. The facts, and the shame of your exulting in them, have been bruited through the land, till they are 'familiar as household words.' What remains to be done, you are laboring to accomplish, by the strongest means in your power—by your legislators, your judiciary, and by holding out, in the shape of rewards, temptations for entering your service, to the most unprincipled, profligate and rapacious of our population. Such a course of conduct would be looked upon, even by a semi-barbarous people, as monstrous; and, were the proof not before them, almost as fabulous and pertaining to a state of society still more primitive. Judge, then, with what an honest indignation it must be viewed, by a civilized and a Christian people; by a people yet free; to whom all the rights you have so often and so insultingly trampled on are still precious, and by whom, those you yet demand to have surrendered to you, are considered as indispensable to their happiness and their existence as a community! And what recompense do you propose to them for a relinquishment of their rights as a people? None—absolutely none. But surely some great advantage will accrue to *yourselves*, some signal and enduring benefit will be secured to you and your posterity from such a sacrifice of principle. And

what is it? No more than this—that you may continue to sell and buy your fellow-creatures, as merchandize, and live in ease, and in splendor, on your neighbor's toil without wages. Is it any thing more than this? Is not this, and this only, the very pith and marrow of your desires, that you may be permitted, without one check of conscience, to maintain a system directly hostile to the great foundation principle of our government; one that is palsying her moral power and bringing dishonor upon her in the eyes of her civilized peers; that has already jeopardized, and is still, more and more, daily jeopardizing our integrity as a nation; which sets at defiance the Almighty, who has invariably pursued it with his curse, demonstrated in the corruption and effemination of every people who have persisted in maintaining it?

And now, gentlemen, it may be, that your objections to my *manner* of telling you the truth, may very naturally lead me to the consideration of the *means* used by the abolitionists for accomplishing their object. This reply having already extended to a greater length than I would wish, were I able to embody the same matter in a smaller compass. I will, on this concluding topic, be as brief as its nature and importance will allow. Suffer me to premise a single remark—one which, I doubt not, in its application to other subjects, you will admit to be correct—that the manner of enforcing the truth does by no means excuse those to whom it is addressed from the obligation which the knowledge of it imposes. All men who are engaged in a course of life for which their consciences have arraigned and condemned them, time after time, but who, with a full determination to persist, have drugged it with opiates, till it has fallen asleep, and has been chained, are pleased with a gentle manner, with the slightest tap at the door of its cell. They will bear and cheerfully

too, any pleasing sounds which will but soothe its slumber. But if we come in the spirit of John, who reproved an incestuous tyrant for his sin, or of Him who said, 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out'—'If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off,' and rudely stave in the door, and with rattling peals of thunder rouse up its slumbering tenant, striking off his chains, and giving him full enlargement, with commands to execute his saving offices, forthwith it is said, 'He hath a devil.' Now, if you will bear it, the *abolitionist*, who has roused your sleeping conscience, and turned it loose unchained, has not the devil. During the snug and dormouse sleep of conscience, this same devil with his confederates, had entered the apartments slavery had provided for him—finding them empty, swept and garnished, he had taken up his abode in them and was quietly, yet effectually, doing his destructive deeds. *This* is he who is fired with rage, and alarmed for his safety, and who makes such mighty outcry at seeing, free and unfettered, his great adversary, *Conscience*, God's vicegerent, clothed in his power, exulting in His might, and, like a giant refreshed with wine, sweeping to his revenge.\*

But we will proceed to particularize objections:

1. You allege that the anti-slavery publications are '*incendiary*'—meaning by this, that they are *designed*, by abolitionists, and that they *do actually tend* to excite the slaves to insurrection against their masters. If such was really their purpose, they pursue the most unwise means

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\* A very ancient barber, who had handled many an honored revolutionary head, was sometimes called to perform his professional offices on that of the venerable Dr. Smith, President of Princeton College. He held the Dr. in the highest possible respect—except in his moments of intoxication. When the fit was on him, and he was staggering about the street, if the Dr. came in sight, he was charged with doing the very things which the barber was enacting. The application I leave to you.

for its accomplishment. Acting as they do, with this design before them—in addition to the names of ‘fanatics’ and ‘incendiaries,’ so liberally bestowed on them, they could easily establish their claim to the still more unenviable one of ‘fools.’ But let me ask of you, in all soberness and christian charity, to consider the reasons I shall give to prove the total improbability of such a design being indulged by the abolitionists :

1. Their principles as they have avowed them are, as I said in a preceding part of this answer, opposed to violence and war, even for the attainment of *right*. Their conscientious adherence to them they have evinced in the many fiery trials to which they have recently been called—in the abuse and dangers to which their persons and their lives have been exposed, and in the unexampled persecutions (for this day and country) which the fierce spirit of southern slavery has roused up against them even at their own doors.

2. Having for their object, not only the *emancipation* of the slaves, but their *happiness*—to be secured, under God, by intellectual and religious improvement—they are opposed to all violence on their part, knowing that it would end only in their utter extermination, or in a still baser and more hopeless subjection of the survivors.

3. They cannot have, as a body of men, any purpose peculiar to them, of a selfish character, to secure—being found of almost every religious denomination, of every political party, of every age and pursuit, and condition in life—farmers, mechanics, manufacturers, merchants, preachers, doctors, lawyers, &c. &c.

4. They address nothing to the slaves—the class to be excited—but all to the masters, against whom insurrection is to be excited. This, for such a purpose, would be a course too ineffably stupid, even for the high-pressure fan-

aticism of the abolitionists, because it puts the whole of the exciting material into the hands of those interested to destroy it.

5. The slaves are unable to read. Of the 200,000 slaves now probably in Alabama, I confidently venture the assertion, that there are not 200 who can read *understandingly* a single tract published at the anti-slavery office. The publications, so far as the *reading* is concerned, would be as harmless, if scattered through your parlors, and on your sofas, and your tables, as so many treatises on astronomy or phrenology. Ah! but you exclaim, 'The pictures! the pictures!' These are what will madden the slave and rouse him up to fury.' And do you believe that the bare wood-cut *representation* of an overseer flogging some two or three crouching slaves, will produce such an effect, when the *reality*, witnessed many times a day, on the large plantations, fails to do it? Or, that the *picture* of a man in chains—such as that to which Whittier's thrilling appeal to his country is attached, a few lines of which I have before quoted; or of a *draw* of their fellow-sufferers urged on in fetters and hand-cuffs to some more distant shambles along the highways, and without any attempt at concealment—do you, I say, believe that such a sight *in picture* would produce a furious out-break, when the commonness of the thing itself, has brought the slaves to look on it with entire composure and indifference? Whatever the mass of slaveholders may believe, the *intelligent* among you do not believe it. They know there is no philosophy in it, any more than there would be, were you trying to rouse up a friend to proper efforts to relieve himself and family from the ills of poverty, in presenting before him the picture of the ills he was suffering; or in holding up a drowning man, that he might be



induced to put forth still greater exertions, the picture of a man catching at straws.

6. Admitting the slaves were all able to read, they would find nothing in the anti-slavery publications to encourage them to a vindication of their natural rights by force. They would find on many of the covers to the tracts, &c., such singular stimulants to insurrection as the following taken from the third Article of the Constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and repeated in almost all the constitutions of her auxiliaries—'This Society will never, in any way, countenance the oppressed in vindicating their rights by resorting to physical force.' In the multiplied tales, fabricated to connect abolitionists with the recent servile tumults, whether real or imaginary, of the South, there has been no *proof*, so far as I know, of any effect having been produced in exciting them by any of the anti-slavery publications. Nor did even *Murell*, whom, without any election on our part, you have imposed on the community as *Pontifex Maximus* of all abolitionists, nor any of his confederates think so highly of them as to use them for agents, however subordinate, in furthering their nefarious plans. To conclude this part of the subject, there are exceedingly *few* if *any* well authenticated instances of anti-slavery publications being found in the hands of the slave population; *none*, of their having any agency in producing the late alarms in the slave states, and *none* of any member of an anti-slavery association, having had, either directly or indirectly, any agency in producing these alarms.

But again: the abolitionists call hard names that cannot be borne. Now, it is very true, and we all are witnesses how difficult it is to bear their application to ourselves. Yet they ought not to throw off its centre any well-regulated mind. If charged falsely, we should most generally

disregard it, and *live down* the falsehood. If truly, we should be admonished (*fas est ab hoste doceri*) to reform that part of our life which has brought the bad name upon us. Sure it is, however, if the balance be struck between abolitionists and their opposers, the latter will be found to have overpaid them, in an amount so great, and in a coin so pure, and so thoroughly unadulterated with the alloy of moderation, or respect, or restraint, that its repayment must be utterly and forever despaired of. However, to a brief answer to the objection.

There were, doubtless, in the days of Paul, a class of men well described as 'men-stealers.' The Mediterranean, and the smaller seas connected with it, were greatly infested by *pirates*, an important branch of whose business was *man-stealing*. Whenever they were able to overpower a village or settlement, and near the coast, they seized on the inhabitants, reduced them to bonds, and sold them in other lands for slaves. So formidable had they become in the time of Pompey the great, that his eulogist, Cicero, in one of his most labored and eloquent orations, makes it ground of high praise, in recounting Pompey's merits as a commander, that he had conducted to a fortunate conclusion the *piratical war*. It may have been to such piratical man-stealers that the apostle especially referred. It is true, he does not mention as a class, distinct from the actual kidnappers, those who became the purchasers, and the holders, and users, through life, of their fellow-men thus reduced to bondage. We are left to conjecture as to the probability that his bold and honest mind did not discern any real difference, and that he had not penetrated to the prevailing distinction of our more enlightened age, which makes such wide discrimination between the guilt of the original captors and that of the very unfortunate gentlemen on whom the 'ENTAIL' has

fallen. He may have bought as you would, in a case where one of your half-breed negroes breaks into your meat-house at midnight, and after satisfying his present hunger, sells the surplus spoil to an unworthy white neighbor—the latter knowing that the meat was stolen. Here, you hesitate not to stigmatize the purchaser, by the same name you would use in describing the actual rogue, and to assign to him, as worthy of it, disgrace and punishment proportioned to the elevation of his intelligence above that of the slave. Yet, *he* was not the *thief*—he only took, retained, and used—and this, in all probability, too, after having paid for it—property stolen from its rightful owner. But no one would be thought uncharitable under any code of ethics with which I am acquainted, who should, in speaking of the purchaser as connected with this transaction, describe him as a *thief*, or his children as *thieves*, if they were to permit the stolen property to be ‘entailed’ on them, or to use it as their own with a full knowledge of the circumstances under which it was introduced into the family. And for this very simple reason—the moral turpitude contracted is as great in the one case as in the other; the *circumstances* of their offences differ, but the *subject-matter*, the *substance* of them is the same. However necessary it may be for the purposes of judicial investigation to make a distinction in describing the two offences—in *morals* there is none called for; they are both *thieves* of the same grade.\*

Will you not find it difficult on applying the same moral code to the man-stealer and the man-buyer, to arrive at a different conclusion as to their comparative guilt? I will merely state the case, leaving you to make the applica-

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\* For the sake of the argument, I have supposed the slave to have no right to the stolen property.

tion. A poor *sans culottes* has been prince, on the coast of Africa—say for instance, ‘Kor Joe Harris,’ or ‘Long Peter,’ with some fifty or sixty followers in the same trim with their leige lords, as to their outward man, inflamed with rum, bedazzled by a few beads and trinkets; equipped with musket, powder and ball, pike and cutlass, purchased by the slaver at a neighboring colony, sets upon his unsuspecting neighbors in the dead of night—kills the old and the resisting; overpowers the weak, and delivers them in chains to their instigator; *he*, to the civilized, the educated, the enlightened American, who, within the sound of the bell that calls him to hear God’s messages of woe—if they were but preached—against the oppressor of his brother—buys, retains, and uses for his own advantage, well knowing the manner in which the spoil came into the slaver’s hands. Now, tell me, where, in morals, is the difference in amount of guilt? Does the *greater* lie on the untaught African, or on the refined American?—Shall the heathen be denounced as the man-stealer—the intermediate agents have heaped on him all the foul names that language can forge, whilst he who consummates the whole transaction, without whom the plunder of his fellow-man could not be continued a single year, is looked upon as entitled to our most delicate regards, our tenderest sympathies; in fine, as a very unfortunate, yet as a very interesting and christian gentleman? Is this the judgment according to God’s standard? I speak as unto wise men—judge ye.

A few words more, and I have done. The South say, they will have no argument on the subject of slavery. Why not? Does it not concern them? Do they not understand it? Have they nothing to lose by a wrong, and nothing to save by a right decision? Has a dogged sullenness beset them—and do they suppose that this will

arrest the inquisition now making by the *people* of this nation into this abuse inveterated by two hundred years of disgraceful duration? Strange resolve! Strange expectation! Persisted in, nothing could furnish stronger evidence of that *dementation* in a community, which, it is said, is the forerunner of its destruction. Already is the subject of slavery infixed on the minds of the *American people*. *Harct lethalis arundo*—you might as well command the lungs not to inhale the surrounding atmosphere for which nature made them, and by whose inspirations they perform their functions, as the public mind not to welcome a discussion, so well fitted to call forth its energies and engage its noblest powers. Neither Southern legislation, dictated by passion and written in blood—nor yet its most faithful execution—any more than the brick-bats and bludgeons and city mobs of the North, can exclude it. A decision *will be made*—it is with you to make it one of tremendous calamity—to *yourselves*; or one which shall raise this whole nation from her dishonorable dust, and show her to the world clothed in the garments of love, and honor, and mercy, and truth. Come, then, and like men, gird yourselves for the contest, and let it be one of reason and of mind—not of passion and abuse. On you, especially, devolves the duty of aiding in the investigation. You have an inexhaustible store of facts—you profess, alone, to understand it, and make light of the pretensions of others. You cannot escape the guilt of a refusal. I invite you, without cost, to the use of the *Philanthropist*. Through its columns your voice may be raised, and your arguments carried to the remotest corner of the land.

To such of you as are called by the name of Christ, and through you to all others in the South, coming under the same description, I desire affectionately to address the

last words of this reply. You are brought, in God's providence, to a fearful crisis. Never, before, has it been with you as it is now. His light has chased the darkness that for two hundred years brooded over the American mind in relation to the oppression of our brother. The signs of the times give assurance that this sin is to be banished not only from our own country, but from the world. It will be done by human instrumentality. In every great work of reform, on whom does God bestow the honor of beginning it? On his Church. Of whom does he ask sacrifices of love? Of his Church—of those for whom he has forgiven much. On whom does he call for leaders in his works of righteousness? On his Church; on those for whom he gave his Son to die. Whom does he summon to take the first step, though it call for self-denial, and be beset with peril even unto death? His Church—those to whom he said 'nothing shall harm you.' Yet you refuse:—you not only refuse, but you stand in the breach, beating back the friends of righteousness, with the very influence God bestowed on you to be used only in warfare for Him. And what is your excuse? *It will ruin the country—immediate righteousness will desolate the South, and convert its rich fields into heathen deserts.* Is this plea true? Has God ever required righteous action from any people and left them to suffer for their obedience? All history says, *No*. But, admit it to be true, and that you are brought to suffer in your estate, to have your ease broken in upon, and your temporal enjoyments curtailed. What of that? Granted the condition is a bad one. But one, infinitely worse is, to live and to die in the perpetration of a sin, against which God has, more than against any other, uttered his hot displeasure, and to appear with it, unrepented of, at his judgment seat. Will you, can you venture your soul's salvation *there*, on this

plea—that, breaking the bands of slavery which you have fastened on your brother, will injure you in your circumstances, or that you will be under the necessity of removing, with your families, to some more Northern clime, less genial to your health and habits? You cannot, as a Christian, you know you dare not—nay, you know it would be better for you at once to surrender your claim of *property* in ‘the widows, the fatherless, the stranger, and the poor’ to them, its rightful owners; to abandon your plantations, and all the apparatus for their culture, with your crops of cotton, and rice, and sugar, as spoil to your first successors, and fly for a residence to the coldest regions of the North, than die, defying the Almighty in this thing.

That the Lord may accompany the foregoing remarks with his blessing, and make them instrumental in the advancement of his glory on earth—of your best interests, and those of our country, is the earnest desire of your friend and fellow-citizen.

JAMES G. BIRNEY.

Cincinnati, Dec. 9, 1835.

## PROTEST OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

*To the President of the United States :*

SIR,—In your message to Congress of the 7th instant, are the following passages : ‘ I must also invite your attention to the painful excitement produced in the South, by attempts to circulate through the mails, inflammatory appeals, *addressed to the passions of the slaves*, in prints and in various sorts of publications, *calculated to stimulate them to insurrection, and produce all the horrors of a servile war*. There is, doubtless, no respectable portion of our countrymen, who can be so far misled as to feel any other sentiment than that of indignant regret, at conduct so destructive of the harmony and peace of the country, and *so repugnant to the principles of our national compact, and to the dictates of humanity and religion*.’ You remark, that it is fortunate that the people of the North have ‘ given so strong and impressive a tone to the sentiments entertained against the proceedings of the misguided persons who have engaged in these *unconstitutional and wicked attempts*.’ And you proceed to suggest to Congress, ‘ the propriety of passing such a law as will prohibit, under severe penalties, the circulation in the Southern states, through the mails, of incendiary publications, *intended to instigate the slaves to insurrection*.’

A servile insurrection, as experience has shown, involves the slaughter of the whites, without respect to sex or age. Hence, sir, the purport of the information you



have communicated to Congress, and to the world, is, that there are American citizens who, in violation of the dictates of humanity and religion, have engaged in unconstitutional and wicked attempts to circulate, through the mails, inflammatory appeals, addressed to the passions of the slaves, and which appeals, as is implied in the object of your proposed law, are *intended* to stimulate the slaves to indiscriminate massacre. Recent events irresistibly confine the application of your remarks to the officers and members of the American Anti-Slavery Society and its auxiliaries.

On the 28th of March, 1834, the Senate of the United States passed the following resolution :

‘Resolved, That the President, in relation to the public revenue, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the Constitution and laws, but in derogation of both.’

On the 5th of the ensuing month, you transmitted to that body your ‘solemn protest’ against their decision. Instructed by your example, we now, sir, in behalf of the Society, of which we are the constituted organs, and in behalf of all who are associated with it, present to you this, our ‘solemn protest’ against your grievous and unfounded accusations.

Should it be supposed, that in thus addressing you, we are wanting in the respect due to your exalted station, we offer, in our vindication, your own acknowledgment to the Senate: ‘Subject only to the restraints of truth and justice, the free people of the United States have the undoubted right as individuals, or collectively, orally, or in writing, at such times and in such language and form as they may think proper, to discuss his (the President’s) official conduct, and to express and promulgate their opinions concerning it.’

In the exercise of this 'undoubted right,' we protest against the judgment you have pronounced against the abolitionists.

*First.* Because, in rendering that judgment officially, you assumed a power not belonging to your office.

You complained, that the resolution censuring your conduct, 'though adopted by the Senate in its legislative capacity, is, in its effect, and in its characteristics, essentially *judicial*.' And thus, sir, although the charges of which we complain were made by you, in your executive capacity, they are, equally with the resolution, essentially judicial. The Senate adjudged that your conduct was unconstitutional. You pass the same judgment on our efforts. Nay, sir, you go farther than the Senate. That body forbore to impeach your motives—but you have assumed the prerogatives, not only of a court of law, but of conscience—and pronounce our efforts to be *wicked* as well as unconstitutional.

*Secondly.* We protest against the *publicity* you have given to your accusations.

You felt it to be a grievance, that the charge against you was 'spread upon the Journal of the Senate, published to the nation and to the world—made part of our enduring archives, and incorporated in the history of the age. The punishment of removal from office, and future disqualification, does not follow the decision; but the *moral influence* of a solemn declaration by a majority of the Senate, that the accused is guilty of the offence charged upon him, has been as effectually secured as if the like declaration had been made upon an impeachment expressed in the same terms.'

And is it nothing, sir, that we are officially charged by the President of the United States, with wicked and unconstitutional efforts, and with harboring the most execra-

ble intentions ; and, this too, in a document spread upon the Journals of both Houses of Congress, published to the nation and to the world, made part of our enduring archives, and incorporated in the history of the age ? It is true, that although you have given judgment against us, you cannot award execution. We are not, indeed, subjected to the penalty of murder ; but need we ask you, sir, what must be the *moral influence* of your declaration, that we have intended its perpetration ?

*Thirdly.* We protest against your condemnation of us *unheard*.

What, sir, was your complaint against the Senate ? ‘ Without notice, *unheard*, and untried, I find myself charged, on the records of the Senate, and in a form unknown in our country, with the high crime of violating the laws and Constitution of my country. No notice of the charge was given to the accused, and no opportunity afforded him to respond to the accusation—to meet his accusers face to face—to cross-examine the witnesses—to procure counteracting testimony, or to be heard in his defence.’

Had you, sir, done to others, as it thus seems you would that others should do to you, no occasion would have been given for this protest. You most truly assert, in relation to the conduct of the Senate, ‘ It is the policy of our benign system of jurisprudence, to secure in all criminal proceedings, and even in the most trivial litigations, a fair, unprejudiced, and impartial trial.’ And by what authority, sir, do you expect such of your fellow-citizens as are known as abolitionists, from the benefit of this benign system ? When has a fair, unprejudiced, and impartial trial been accorded to those who dare to maintain that all men are equally entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ? What was the trial, sir, which preceded the judgment you have rendered against them ?

*Fourthly.* We protest against the *vagueness* of your charges.

We cannot more forcibly describe the injustice you have done us, than by adopting your own indignant remonstrance, against what you deemed similar injustice on the part of the Senate, 'Some of the first principles of natural right and enlightened jurisprudence, have been violated in the very form of the resolution. It carefully abstains from averring in *which* of the late proceedings the President has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the Constitution and laws. Why was not the certainty of the offence, the nature and cause of the accusation, set out in the manner required in the Constitution, before even the humblest individual, for the smallest crime, can be exposed to condemnation? Such a specification was due to the accused, that he might direct his defence to the real points of attack. A more striking illustration of the soundness and necessity of the rule which forbid *vague and indefinite generalities*, and require a reasonable certainty in all judicial allegations, and a more glaring instance of the violation of these rules, has seldom been exhibited.'

It has been reserved for you, sir, to exhibit a still more striking illustration of the importance of these rules, and a still more glaring instance of their violation. You have accused an indefinite number of your fellow-citizens, without designation of name or residence, of making unconstitutional and wicked efforts, and of harboring intentions which could be entertained only by the most depraved and abandoned of mankind; and yet you carefully abstain from averring *which* Article of the Constitution they have transgressed; you omit stating when, where, and by whom these wicked attempts were made; you give no specification of the inflammatory appeals, which you assert have

been addressed to the passions of the slaves. You well know that the '*moral influence*' of your charges will affect thousands and tens of thousands of your countrymen, many of them your political friends—some of them heretofore honored with your confidence—most, if not all of them, of irreproachable characters; and yet, by the very vagueness of your charges, you incapacitate each one of this multitude from proving his innocence.

*Fifthly.* We protest against your charges, because they are *untrue*. Surely, sir, the burthen of proof rests upon you. If you possess evidence against us, we are, by your own showing, entitled to 'an opportunity to cross-examine witnesses, to procure counteracting testimony, and to be heard in [*our*] defence.' You complained that you had been denied such an opportunity. It was not to have been expected, then, that you would make the conduct of the Senate the model of your own. Conscious of the wrong done to you, and protesting against it, you found yourself compelled to enter on your defence. You have placed us in similar circumstances, and we proceed to follow your example:

The substance of your various allegations may be embodied in the charge, that *we have attempted to circulate, through the mails, appeals addressed to the passions of the slaves, calculated to stimulate them to insurrection, and with the intention of producing a servile war.*

It is deserving of notice, that the *attempt* to circulate our papers, is alone charged upon us. It is not pretended that we have put our appeals into the hands of a single slave, or that, in any instance, our endeavors to excite a servile war have been crowned with success. And in what way was our most execrable attempts made? By secret agents, traversing the slave country in disguise, stealing by night into the hut of the slave, and there reading to

him our inflammatory appeals? You, sir, answer this question by declaring, that we attempted the mighty mischief by circulating our appeals 'THROUGH THE MAILS!' And are the Southern slaves, sir, accustomed to receive periodicals by mail? Of the thousands of publications mailed from the Anti-Slavery Office for the South, did you ever hear, sir, of one solitary paper being addressed to a slave? Would you know to whom they were directed, consult the Southern newspapers, and you would find them complaining that they were sent to public officers, clergymen, and other influential citizens. Thus it seems we are incendiaries, who place the torch in the hands of him whose dwellings we would fire! We are conspiring to excite a servile war, and announce our design to the masters, and commit to their care and disposal the very instruments by which we expect to effect our purpose! It has been said that thirty or forty of our papers were received at the South, directed to free people of color. We cannot deny the assertion, because these papers may have been mailed by others, for the sinister purpose of charging the act upon us. We are, however, ready to make our several affidavits, that not one paper, with our knowledge, or by our authority, has ever been sent to any person in a slave state. The free people of color at the South can exert no influence in behalf of the enslaved; and we have no disposition to excite odium against them, by making them the recipients of our publications.

Your proposal that a law should be passed, punishing the circulation, through the mails, of papers *intended to excite the slaves to insurrection*, necessarily implies that such papers are now circulated; and you expressly and positively assert, that we have attempted to circulate appeals addressed to the passions of the slaves, and *calculated to produce all the horrors of a servile war*. We trust, sir,

your proposed law, so portentous to the freedom of the press, will not be enacted, till you have furnished Congress with stronger evidence of its necessity than unsupported assertions. We hope you will lay before that body, for its information, the papers to which you refer. This is the more necessary, as the various public journals and meetings which have denounced us for entertaining insurrectionary and murderous designs, have in no instance been able to quote from our publications, a single exhortation to the slaves to break their fetters, or the expression of a solitary wish for a servile war.

How far our writings are '*calculated*' to produce insurrection, is a question which will be variously decided according to the latitude in which it is discussed. When we recollect that the humble school book, the tale of fiction, and the costly annual, have been placed under the ban of Southern editors for trivial allusions to slavery—and that a Southern divine has warned his fellow-citizens of the danger of permitting slaves to be present at the celebration of our national festival, where they might listen to the Declaration of Independence, and to eulogiums on liberty—we have little hope that our disquisitions on human rights will be generally deemed safe and innocent, where these rights are habitually violated. Certain writings of one of your predecessors, President Jefferson, would undoubtedly be regarded, in some places, so insurrectionary as to expose to popular violence whoever should presume to circulate them.

As therefore, sir, there is no common standard by which the criminality of opinions respecting slavery can be tested, we acknowledge the foresight which prompted you to recommend, that the '*severe penalties*' of your proposed law should be awarded, not according to the character of the publication, but the *intention* of the writer. Still,

sir, we apprehend that no trivial difficulties will be experienced in the application of your law. The writer may be anonymous, or beyond the reach of prosecution, while the porter who deposits the papers in the Post Office, and the mail carrier who transports them, having no evil intentions, cannot be visited with the 'severe penalties;' and thus will your law fail in securing to the South that entire exemption from all discussions on the subject of slavery, which it so vehemently desires. The success of the attempt already made to establish a censorship of the press, is not such as to invite farther encroachment on the right of the people to publish their sentiments.

In your protest, you remarked to the Senate, 'The whole executive power being vested in the President, who is *responsible* for its exercise, it is a necessary consequence that he should have a right to employ agents of his *own choice*, to aid him in the performance of his duties, and to *discharge* them when he is no longer *willing* to be RESPONSIBLE for their acts. He is equally bound to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, whether they impose duties on the highest officer of State, or the *lowest subordinate* in any of the departments.'

It may not be uninteresting to you, sir, to be informed in what manner your 'Subordinate' in New York, who, on your 'responsibility' is exercising the functions of Censor of the American press, discharges the arduous duties of this untried, and until now, unheard of office. We beg leave to assure you, that his task is executed with a simplicity of principle, and celerity of despatch, unknown to any Censor of the press in France or Austria. Your subordinate decides upon the incendiary character of the publications committed to the Post Office, by a glance at the wrappers or bags in which they are contained. No



packages sent to be mailed from our office, and directed to a slave state, can escape the vigilance of this inspector of canvass and brown paper. Even your own protest, sir, if in an anti-slavery envelope, would be arrested on its progress to the south, as 'inflammatory, incendiary and insurrectionary in the highest degree.'

No veto, however, is *as yet*, imposed on the circulation of publications from any printing office but our own.—Hence, when we desire to send 'appeals' to the south, all that is necessary is, to insert them in some newspaper that espouses our principles, pay for as many thousand copies as we think proper, and order them to be mailed according to our instructions.

Such, sir, is the worthless protection purchased for the south, by the most unblushing and dangerous usurpation of which any public officer has been guilty since the organization of our federal government. Were the Senate, in reference to your acknowledged responsibility for the conduct of your subordinates, to resolve 'that the President in relation to the suppression of certain papers in the New York Post Office, has assumed upon himself authority and power not conferred by the Constitution and laws, but in derogation of both ;' instead of protesting against the charge, you would be compelled to acknowledge its truth, and you would plead the *necessity* of the case in your vindication. The weight to be attached to such a plea, may be learned from the absurdity and inefficacy of the New York Censorship. Be assured, sir, your proposed law to punish the *intentions* of an author, will in its practical operations, prove equally impotent.

And now, sir, permit us respectfully to suggest to you, the propriety of ascertaining the *real* designs of abolitionists, before your apprehensions of them, lead you to sanction any more trifling with the LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.—

You assume it as a fact, that abolitionists are miscreants, who are laboring to effect the massacre of their southern brethren. Are you aware of the extent of the reproach, which such an assumption casts upon the character of your countrymen? In August last, the number of Anti-Slavery Societies known to us, was 263; we have *now* the names of more than 350 Societies, and accessions are daily made to the multitude who embrace our principles. And can you think it possible, sir, that these citizens are deliberately plotting murder, and furnishing us with funds to send publications to the south 'intended to instigate the slaves to insurrection?' Is there any thing in the character and manners of the free states, to warrant the imputation on their citizens of such enormous wickedness?—Have you ever heard, sir, of whole communities in these states, subjecting obnoxious individuals to a mock trial, and then in contempt of law, humanity and religion, deliberately murdering them? You have seen in the public journals, great rewards offered for the perpetration of horrible crimes. We appeal to your candor and ask, Were these rewards offered by abolitionists, or by men whose charges against abolitionists, you have condescended to sanction and disseminate?

And what, sir, is the character of those whom you have in your message held up to the execration of the civilized world? Their enemies being judges, they are *religious* fanatics. And what are the haunts of these plotters of murder? The pulpit, the bench, the bar, the professor's chair, the hall of legislation, the meeting for prayer, the temple of the Most High. But strange and monstrous as is this conspiracy, still you believe in its existence, and call on Congress to counteract it. Be persuaded, sir, the moral sense of the community is abundantly sufficient to render this conspiracy utterly impotent, the moment its machina-

tions are exposed. Only **PROVE** the assertions and insinuations in your message, and you dissolve in an instant every Anti-Slavery Society in our land. Think not, sir, that we shall interpose any obstacle to an inquiry into our conduct. We invite, nay, sir, we entreat the appointment by Congress of a committee of investigation, to visit the Anti-Slavery Office in New York. They shall be put in possession of copies of all the publications that have issued from our press. Our whole correspondence shall be submitted to their inspection; our accounts of receipts and expenditures shall be spread before them, and we ourselves will cheerfully answer under oath whatever interrogatories they may put to us relating to the charges you have advanced.

Should such a committee be denied, and should the law you propose, stigmatizing us as felons, be passed without inquiry into the truth of your accusation, and without allowing us a hearing, then shall we make the language of your protest our own, and declare that, ‘If such proceedings shall be approved and sustained by an intelligent people, then will the great contest with arbitrary power which had established in statutes, in bills of rights, in sacred charters, and in constitutions of government, the right of every citizen to a notice before trial, to a hearing before condemnation, and to an impartial tribunal for deciding on the charge, have been made in **VAIN**.’

Before we conclude, permit us, sir, to offer you the following assurances.

Our principles, our objects, and our measures, are wholly uncontaminated by considerations of party policy. Whatever may be our respective opinions as citizens, of men and measures, as abolitionists we have expressed no political preferences, and are pursuing no party ends. From neither of the gentlemen nominated to succeed you, have

we any thing to hope or fear ; and to neither of them do we intend, as abolitionists, to afford any aid or influence. This declaration will, it is hoped, satisfy the partizans of the rival candidates, that it is not necessary for them to assail our rights, by way of convincing the south that they do not possess our favor.

We have addressed you, sir, on this occasion, with republican plainness, and Christian sincerity ; but with no desire to derogate from the respect that is due to you, or wantonly to give you pain. To repel your charges, and to disabuse the public, was a duty we owed to ourselves, to our children, and above all, to the great and holy cause in which we are engaged. That cause we believe is approved by our Maker ; and while we retain this belief, it is our intention, trusting to His direction and protection, to persevere in our endeavors to impress upon the minds and hearts of our countrymen the sinfulness of claiming property in human beings, and the duty and wisdom of immediately relinquishing it.

When convinced that our endeavors are wrong, we shall abandon them, but such conviction must be produced by other arguments than vituperation, popular violence, or penal enactments.

ARTHUR TAPPAN,  
WILLIAM JAY,  
JOHN RANKIN,  
ABRAHAM L. COX,  
JOSHUA LEAVITT,  
SIMEON S. JOCELYN,  
LEWIS TAPPAN,  
THEODORE S. WRIGHT,  
SAMUEL E. CORNISH,  
ELIZUR WRIGHT, Jr.,  
*Executive Committee.*

NEW YORK, Dec. 26, 1835.

# TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES,

OR, TO SUCH AMERICANS AS VALUE THEIR RIGHTS, AND  
DARE TO MAINTAIN THEM.

*Fellow Countrymen :—*

A crisis has arrived, in which rights the most important which civil society can acknowledge, and which have been acknowledged by our Constitution and laws, in terms the most explicit which language can afford, are set at naught by men whom your favor has invested with a brief authority. By what standard is your liberty of conscience, of speech, and of the press, now measured? Is it by those glorious charters you have inherited from your fathers, and which your present rulers have called Heaven to witness, they would preserve inviolate? Alas! another standard has been devised, and if we would know what rights are conceded to us by our own servants, we must consult the compact by which the South engages on certain conditions to give its trade and votes to northern men. All rights not allowed by this compact, we now hold by sufferance, and our Governors and Legislatures avow their readiness to deprive us of them, whenever in their opinion, legislation on the subject shall be 'necessary.'\* This compact is not indeed published to the world, under the hands and seals of the contracting parties, but it is set forth in

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\* See the Messages of the Governors of New York and Connecticut, the resolutions of the New York Legislature, and the bill introduced into the Legislature of Rhode Island.

official messages,—in resolutions of the State and National Legislatures—in the proceedings of popular meetings, and in acts of lawless violence. The temples of the Almighty have been sacked, because the worshippers did not conform their consciences to the compact.\* Ministers of the gospel have been dragged as criminals from the altar to the bar, because they taught the people, from the Bible, doctrines proscribed by the compact.† Hundreds of free citizens peaceably assembled to express their sentiments, have, because such an expression was forbidden by the compact, been forcibly dispersed, and the chief actor in this invasion on the freedom of speech, instead of being punished for a breach of the peace, was rewarded for his fidelity to the compact, with an office of high trust and honor.‡

‘The freedom of the press—the palladium of liberty,’ was once a household proverb. Now, a printing office§ is entered by ruffians, and its types scattered in the highway, because disobedient to the compact. A Grand Jury, sworn to ‘present all things truly as they come to their knowledge,’ refuse to indict the offenders; and a Senator in Congress rises in his place, and appeals to the outrage in the printing office, and the conduct of the Grand Jury as evidence of the good faith with which the people of the State of New York were resolved to observe the compact.||

The Executive Magistrate of the American Union, unmindful of his obligation to execute the laws for the equal benefit of his fellow citizens, has sanctioned a censorship

\* Churches in New York attacked by a mob in 1834.

† See two cases within the last twelve months in New Hampshire.

‡ Samuel Beardsley, Esq., the leader of the Utica riot, was shortly afterwards appointed Attorney General of the State of New York.

§ Office of the Utica Standard and Democrat newspaper.

|| See speech of the Hon. Silas Wright in the U. S. Senate of Feb. last.

of the press, by which papers incompatible with the compact are excluded from the southern mails, and he has officially advised Congress to do by law, although in violation of the Constitution, what he had himself virtually done already in despite of both. The invitation has indeed been rejected, but by the Senate of the United States only, after a portentous struggle—a struggle which distinctly exhibited the *political* conditions of the compact, as well as the fidelity with which those conditions are observed by a northern candidate for the Presidency. While in compliance with these conditions, a powerful minority in the Senate were forging fetters for the Press, the House of Representatives were employed in breaking down the right of PETITION. On the 26th May last, the following resolution, reported by a committee, was adopted by the House, viz :

‘ *Resolved*, That all Petitions, Memorials, Resolutions and Propositions relating in any way, or to any extent whatever to the subject of Slavery, shall, without being either printed or referred, be laid on the table, and that no farther action whatever shall be had thereon.’ Ayes, 117. Nays, 68.

Bear with us, fellow countrymen, while we call your attention to the outrage on your rights, the contempt of personal obligations and the hardened cruelty involved in this detestable resolution. Condemn us not for the harshness of our language, before you hear our justification. We shall speak only the truth, but we shall speak it as freemen.

The right of petition is founded in the very institution of civil government, and has from time immemorial been acknowledged as among the unquestionable privileges of our English ancestors. This right springs from the great truth that government is established for the benefit of the governed, and it forms the medium by which the People

acquaint their rulers with their wants and their grievances. So accustomed were the Americans to the exercise of this right, even during their subjection to the British Crown, that, on the formation of the Federal Constitution, the Convention not conceiving that it could be endangered, made no provision for its security. But in the first Congress that assembled under the new Government, the omission was repaired. It was thought some case might possibly occur, in which this right might prove troublesome to a dominant faction, who would endeavor to stifle it. An amendment was therefore proposed and adopted, by which Congress is restrained from making any law abridging 'the right of the people, peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.' Had it not been for this prudent jealousy of our Fathers, instead of the resolution I have transcribed, we should have had a law, visiting with pains and penalties, all who dared to petition the Federal Government, in behalf of the victims of oppression, held in bondage by its authority. The present resolution cannot indeed consign such petitions to the prison or the scaffold, but it makes the right to petition a congressional boon, to be granted or withheld at pleasure, and in the present case effectually withholds it, by rendering it nugatory.

Petitions are to inform the Government of the wishes of the People, and by calling forth the action of the Legislature, to inform the constituents how far their wishes are respected by their representatives. The information thus mutually given and received is essential to a faithful and enlightened exercise of the right of legislation on the one hand, and of suffrage on the other. But the resolution we are considering, provides that no petition in relation to slavery, shall be printed for the information of the members, nor referred to a committee to ascertain the truth of



its statements; nor shall any vote be taken, in regard to it, by which the people may learn the sentiments of their representatives.

If Congress may thus dispose of petitions on one subject, they may make the same disposition of petitions on any and every other subject. Our representatives are bound by oath, not to pass any law abridging the right of petition, but if this resolution is constitutional, they may order every petition to be delivered to their door-keeper, and by him be committed to the flames; for why preserve petitions on which *no action can be had*? Had the resolution been directed to petitions for an object palpably unconstitutional, it would still have been without excuse. The construction of the Constitution is a matter of opinion, and every citizen has a right to express that opinion in a petition, or otherwise.

But this usurpation is aggravated by the almost universal admission that Congress does possess the constitutional power to legislate on the subject of slavery in the District of Columbia and the Territories. No wonder that a distinguished statesman refused to sanction the right of the House to pass such a resolution by even voting against it.\* The men who perpetrated this outrage had sworn to support the Constitution, and will they hereafter plead at the bar of their Maker, that they had kept their oath, because they had abridged the right of petition *by a resolution*, and not by law!

This resolution not only violates the rights of the people, but it nullifies the privileges and obligations of their representatives. It is the undoubted right and duty of every

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\* Mr. J. Q. Adams, on his name being called, refused to vote, saying, 'the resolution is in direct violation of the Constitution of the United States, and the privileges of the members of this House.'

member of Congress to propose any measure within the limits of the Constitution, which he believes is required by the interests of his constituents and the welfare of his country. Now, mark the base surrender of this right—the wicked dereliction of this duty. All ‘resolutions and propositions’ relating ‘in *any way* or to *any extent* whatever to the subject of slavery,’ shall be laid on the table, and ‘no farther action *whatever* shall be had thereon.’—What a spectacle has been presented to the American people!—117 members of Congress relinquishing their own rights, cancelling their own solemn obligations, forcibly depriving the other members of their legislative privileges, abolishing the freedom of debate, condemning the right of petition, and prohibiting present and future legislation on a most important and constitutional subject, by a rule of order!

In 1825, the New York Legislature instructed the representatives from that state in Congress, to insist on making ‘the prohibition of slavery an indispensable condition of admission’ of certain territories into the Union. In 1828, the Legislature of Pennsylvania instructed the Pennsylvania members of Congress, to vote for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. In vain, hereafter, shall a representative present the instructions of his constituents, or the injunctions of a sovereign state. No question shall be taken, on any motion he may offer, in *any way* or to *any extent*, relating to slavery!

Search the annals of legislation, and you will find no precedent for such a profligate act of tyranny, exercised by a majority over their fellow legislators, nor for such an impudent contempt of the rights of the People.

But this resolution is no less barbarous than it is profligate and impudent. Remember, fellow-countrymen! that the decree has gone forth, that there shall be no legislation

by Congress, *in any way or to any extent whatever*, on the subject of slavery. Now call to mind, that Congress is the *local* and only legislature of the District of Columbia, which is placed by the Constitution under its 'exclusive jurisdiction *in all cases whatsoever*.' In this District, there are thousands of human beings divested of the rights of humanity, and subjected to a negotiable despotism; and Congress is the only power that can extend the shield of law to protect them from cruelty and abuse: and that shield, it is now resolved, shall not be extended in any way, or to any extent! But this is not all. The District has become the great slave market of North America, and the port of Alexandria is the Guinea of our proud republic, whence 'cargoes of despair' are continually departing.\*

In the city which bears the name of the Father of his country, dealers in human flesh receive licences for the vile traffic, at \$400 each per annum; and the gazettes of the capital have their columns polluted with the advertisements of these men, offering cash for children and youth, who, torn from their parents and families, are to wear out their existence on the plantations of the south† For the safe keeping of these children and youth, till they are shipped for the Mississippi, private pens and prisons are provided, and the UNITED STATES' JAIL used when required. The laws of the District in relation to slaves and free negroes, are of the most abominable and iniquitous character. Any free citizen with a dark skin, may be

\* One dealer, John Armfield, advertises in the National Intelligencer of the 10th of February last, that he has three vessels in the trade, and that they will leave the port of Alexandria on the 1st and 15th of each month.

† Twelve hundred negroes are thus advertised for in the National Intelligencer of the 28th of March last. The negroes wanted are generally from the age of 10 or 12 years to 25, and of both sexes.

arrested on pretence of being a fugitive slave, and committed to the UNITED STATES' PRISON, and unless within a certain number of days he proves his freedom, while immured within its walls, he is, under authority of Congress, sold as a slave for life. Do you ask why? Let the blood mantle in your cheeks, while we give you the answer of the LAW—'to pay his jail fees'!!

On the 11th of January, 1827, the Committee for the District of Columbia, (themselves slaveholders) introduced a bill providing that the jail fees should hereafter be a county charge. The bill did not pass: and by the late resolution, a statute unparalleled for injustice and atrocity by any mandate of European despotism, is to be like the law of the Medes and Persians, that altereth not, since no proposition for its repeal or modification can be entertained.

The Grand Jury of Alexandria presented the slave-trade of that place, as 'disgraceful to our character as citizens of a free government,' and as 'a grievance demanding legislative redress;' that is, the interposition of Congress—but 117 men have decided that there shall be 'no action whatever' by Congress in relation to slavery.

In March, 1816, John Randolph submitted the following resolution to the House of Representatives: 'Resolved, That a committee be appointed to inquire into the existence of an *inhuman* and illegal traffic of slaves, carried on in and through the District of Columbia, and to report whether any, and what measures are necessary for putting a stop to the same.' The compact had not then been formed, and the resolution *was adopted*. Such a resolution would *now* 'be laid on the table,' and treated with silent contempt.

In 1828, eleven hundred inhabitants of the District presented a petition to Congress, complaining of the 'Do-

MESTIC SLAVE TRADE' as a grievance disgraceful in its character, and 'even more demoralizing in its influence,' than the foreign traffic. The petition concluded as follows: 'The people of this District have within themselves no means of legislative redress, and we therefore appeal to your Honorable body as the *only one* vested by the American Constitution with power to relieve us.' No more shall such appeals be made to the national council. What matters it, that the people of the District are annoyed by the human shambles opened among them? What matters it, that Congress is 'the only body vested by the American Constitution with power to relieve' them?—The compact requires that no action shall be had on *any* petition relating to slavery.

The horse or the ox may be protected in the District, by act of Congress, from the cruelty of its owner; but MAN, created in the image of God, shall, if his complexion be dark, be abandoned to every outrage. The negro may be bound alive to the stake in front of the capitol, as well as in the streets of St. Louis—his shrieks may resound through the representative hall—and the stench of his burning body may enter the nostrils of the law-givers—but no vote may rebuke the abomination—no law forbid its repetition.

The representatives of the nation may regulate the traffic in sheep and swine, within the ten miles square; but the SLAVERS of the District may be laden to suffocation with human cattle—the horrors of the middle passage may be transcended at the wharves of Alexandria: but Congress may not limit the size of the cargoes, or provide for the due feeding and watering the animals composing them! The District of Columbia is henceforth to be the only spot on the face of the globe, subjected to a civilized and christian police, in which avarice and malice may, with legal

impunity inflict on humanity whatever sufferings ingenuity can devise, or depravity desire.

The flagitiousness of this resolution is aggravated if possible by the arbitrary means by which its adoption was secured. No representative of the People was permitted to lift up his voice against it—to plead the commands of the Constitution which it violated—his own privileges and duties which it contemned—the rights of his constituents on which it trampled—the claims of justice and humanity which it impiously outraged. Its advocates were afraid and ashamed to discuss it, and forbidding debate, they perpetrated in silence the most atrocious act that has ever disgraced an American Legislature.\*

And was no reason whatever, it may be asked, assigned for this bold invasion of our rights, this insult to the sympathies of our common nature? Yes—connected with the resolution was a preamble explaining its object. Read it, fellow countrymen, and be equally astonished at the impudence of your rulers in avowing such an object, and at their folly in adopting such an expedient to effect it. The lips of a free people are to be sealed by insult and injury!

‘Whereas, it is extremely important and desirable that the AGITATION on this subject should be finally ARRESTED, for the purpose of restoring *tranquillity* to the public mind, your committee respectfully recommend the following resolution.’

*Order reigns in Warsaw*, were the terms in which the triumph of Russia over the liberties of Poland was an-

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\* A debate was allowed on a motion to re-commit the report, for the purpose of preparing a resolution that Congress has no constitutional power to interfere with slavery in the District of Columbia; but when the sense of the House is to be taken on the resolution reported by the committee, all debate was prevented by the previous question.

nounced to the world. When the right of petition shall be broken down—when no whisper shall be heard in Congress in behalf of human rights—when the press shall be muzzled, and the freedom of speech destroyed by gag-laws, then will the slaveholders announce, that *tranquillity is restored to the public mind.*

Fellow countrymen! is such the tranquillity you desire—is such the heritage you would leave to your children? Suffer not the present outrage, by effecting its avowed object, to invite farther aggressions on your rights. The chairman on the committee boasted that the number of petitioners the present session, for the abolition of slavery in the District, was *only* 34,000! Let us resolve, we beseech you, that at the next session the number shall be A MILLION. Perhaps our 117 representatives will then abandon in despair their present dangerous and unconstitutional expedient for tranquillizing the public mind.

The purpose of this address is not to urge upon you our own views of the selfishness of slavery, and the safety of its immediate abolition; but to call your attention to the conduct of your rulers. Let no one think for a moment, that because he is not an abolitionist, his liberties are not, and will not be invaded. *We* have no rights distinct from the rights of the people. Calumny, falsehood, and popular violence, have been employed in vain, to tranquillize abolitionists. It is now proposed to soothe them, by despoiling them of their constitutional rights; but they cannot be despoiled *alone*. The right of petition and the freedom of debate are as sacred and valuable to those who dissent from our opinions, as they are to ourselves. Can the Constitution at the same time secure liberty to you, and expose us to oppression—give you freedom of speech,

and lock our lips—respect your right of petition, and treat ours with contempt? No, fellow countrymen! we must be all free, or all slaves together. We implore you, then, by all the obligations of interest, of patriotism, and of religion—by the remembrance of your fathers—by your love for your children, to unite with us in maintaining our common, and till lately, our unquestioned political rights.

We ask you as men to insist that your servants, acting as the local legislators of the District of Columbia, shall respect the common rights and decencies of humanity. We ask you as freemen, not to permit your constitutional privileges to be trifled with, by those who have sworn to maintain them. We ask you as Christian men, to remember that by sanctioning the sinful acts of your agents, you yourselves assume their guilt.

We have no candidate to recommend to your favor—we ask not your support for any political party; but we do ask you to give your suffrages hereafter only to such men as you have reason to believe will not sacrifice your rights, and their own obligations, and the claims of mercy and the commands of God, to an iniquitous and mercenary compact. If we cannot have northern Presidents and other officers of the general government, except in exchange for freedom of conscience, of speech, of the press, and of legislation, then let all the appointments at Washington be given to the South. If slaveholders will not trade with us, unless we consent to be slaves ourselves, then let us leave their money, and their sugar, and their cotton, to perish with them.

Fellow countrymen! we wish, we recommend no action whatever, inconsistent with the laws and constitutions of our country, or the precepts of our common religion, but



we beseech you to join with us in resolving, that while we will respect the rights of others, we will at every hazard maintain our own.

In behalf of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

ARTHUR TAPPAN,  
WILLIAM JAY,  
JOHN RANKIN,  
LEWIS TAPPAN,  
SIMEON S. JOCELYN,  
SAMUEL E. CORNISH,  
JOSHUA LEAVITT,  
ABRAHAM L. COX,  
AMOS A. PHELPS,  
LA ROY SUNDERLAND,  
THEODORE S. WRIGHT,  
ELIZUR WRIGHT, Jr.,  
*Executive Committee.*

NEW YORK, June, 1836.

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE N. YORK ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

After we had read the following very eloquent epistle, we could not help thinking of that choice proverb of the wise man—‘A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold, in pictures of silver.’

UTICA, AUGUST 26TH, 1836.

*To the Executive Committee of the  
Ohio State Anti-Slavery Society, at Cincinnati.*

DEAR AND HONORED BRETHREN:—Fellow-laborers in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ; and in the cause of his despised and oppressed poor. The shout of your ruthless persecutors has fallen upon our ears; and amid the pauses of the storm, we have been cheered by the calm and firm tones of your own unchanged voice. We hasten to mingle our hearts with yours; to sing, with you, of mercy and of judgment; the mercy that has unmasked a nation's enemies, and shielded your heads, and guarded your precious lives, when the floods of ungodly men rose up against you:—the justice that has visited upon an oppressive and callous nation, a heavy blow upon her own boasted, but despised liberties.

We know we need not occupy our time or yours with lengthened exhortations to courage and patience under your own sufferings. We know you will not think it strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as

though some strange thing had happened unto you. It was in no mere worldly enterprize—it was in no scheme of partizan ambition—it was in no partnership with those who seek their own things and not the things of Jesus Christ and his suffering members, that you banded yourselves together. Of your plundered property—of your own invaded domicils—of your own insulted persons—of your own endangered lives—of your own outraged rights—of your own accumulated wrongs—we are persuaded that you have comparatively thought little. Of these topics we shall, accordingly, say little, in tendering to you our condolence and our sympathies.

We mourn, rather, with you, the infatuation of those, who are aiming, through your vitals, a death-blow to their own, their children's, and their country's freedom. We mourn, with you, the affecting indications, in the midst of us, of that blindness of mind, and that hardness of heart, which constitute the most fearful presages of a nation's downfall. We mourn, with you, the deep wound inflicted, in the house of his professed friends, upon the cause of our common Saviour. We mourn, with you, that those who profess to be his disciples, and claim to be the ministers of his truth, should not only 'stand aloof' from the 'cause of the poor and needy,' should not only count it obedience to Jesus Christ to disregard and despise his little ones, should not only forget that 'inasmuch as they relieve not and succor not the least of these his brethren, they do it not unto him'—but, as though these negligences, for which the great Judge has seen fit to pronounce his anticipated sentence of condemnation, were not sufficient for them—as though the quiet acceptancy of the scorner's seat, the menial drudgery of wresting the Scriptures to the support of impurity and heathenism, of robbery and crime, could not suffice to satisfy their greediness—should now think

they do God service, when, in defiance of all human and divine laws, combine with the sons of violence, to inflict injuries and outrage upon those who presume to 'show the house of Jacob their sins, and remember them that are in bonds as bound with them.'

For things like these, dear brethren, with you, we mourn. Nor can we cease to sigh and cry while such abominations are committed in our land. Yet, while we thus grieve, let us remember that we are permitted to rejoice in the all-pervading and overruling Providence of them whose power can bring light out of darkness, and good out of evil. He stilleth the tumult of the sea, and the raging of the people. The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder he will restrain. Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and his anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their chords from us! He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. His king is on his holy hill of Zion. He has declared the decree. The rolling of his chariot is onward. Nations may dash themselves, as the potter's vessel, under his wheels—but his march is still onward, till all his enemies are put under his feet.

In the certainty of His reign, and in the glory of His triumph, let us rejoice. Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be, but the meek shall inherit the earth, and the upright shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Let us pause, and ponder, for a moment, the delightful results which, under the good Providence of God, and in accordance with the known and established laws of moral cause and effect, in his moral government, may yet spring from the painful scenes you are now called to witness, and through which you are now called to pass. Let us inquire

diligently whether these results may not include some germ of promise for our guilty but beloved country—whether, along with the sure prospect of ‘deliverance to the Captive,’ (which the recorded oath and veracity of a God has already rendered secure,) there can be not a bow of hope for an oppressive but repentant nation?

If it be the purpose of God to save our nation from destruction, we well know that it must be in a way of national penitence and amendment. If the churches in our land, are to escape total apostacy and extinction, we know they must repent, and bring forth fruit meet for repentance. But what hope was there of a cure, so long as the deadly malady was preying upon her vitals, unrevealed? Or what instrumentality could be better adapted to arouse a slumbering people, and convict a self-righteous church, than the astounding and painful developements in your city, within a few weeks, and a few days past?

If the people of Ohio and of the Union, are not already past feeling and past hope, if the last vestige of political foresight as well as moral discernment has not ceased from among them—they must *now* see what it has hitherto been so difficult to show them—that there is no possible alternative between the enfranchisement of the *slave* and subjugation of the *free*—that the common Father of all men never intended the liberties of a portion of his equal children should long be preserved, while they neglected to claim the equal liberties of their brethren; that the movements of his providence render such an arrangement impossible—that the changeless constitution of human nature, renders the very supposition an absurdity! The voice of the slaveholders, through their associates in your city, has abundantly proclaimed that *slavery cannot stand*, except it be upon the ruins of the free press. And with equal distinctness and solemnity, has the voice of the non-

slaveholding aristocracy been heard to decree, that the free press of the non-slaveholding states must fall! At their bidding, nay, with the violence of their hands the *free press has* fallen! The press that *remains*, has registered its own confession that it is *not* free, and DARES NOT 'ADVENTURE an opinion' amidst 'the actors' of that scene.\* Yes! In the face of Europe and of the world, it has been recorded that freedom of the press, in the commercial metropolis of one of the free states of America has already passed away, and is known only in the history of the things that *have* been; the things that may or may not hereafter, *again* be!

Is there not reason, dear brethren, to hope, that the thunder tones of an annunciation like this, may suffice to rouse freemen from their slumbers, and freedom from its grave?

Depend upon it, dear brethren, the spell of apathy and the delusion of confiding credulity, on the minds of many, many thousands, has been suddenly and irrevocably broken. Whatever of scepticism there *may* have been, a month or two ago, in respect to the SETTLED LEAGUE between the M'Duffies of the south, and their aristocratic 'brethren of the north,' to crucify the freedom of the free, in order to secure the continued slavery of the slave—there will nothing of such a scepticism remain among the intelligent readers of the passing news *now*. To the 'imprudent and reckless' aristocracy of Cincinnati has been reserved the task of certifying, *over their own signatures*, the truth of this oft reiterated, but seemingly incredible charge. Nor have they failed to state, in terms too plain to need elucidation, too explicit to permit evasion, that in the prosecu-

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\* Cincinnati Daily Gazette.

tion of their plans they aim at **REVOLUTION**; they trample the **CONSTITUTION** under foot, they bid defiance to the sovereign people and their laws! The issue is now fairly made up. It is understood by all. It is the constitution, order, law, and liberty for all **Americans**, on the one hand:—It is revolution, anarchy, mobocracy, and the slavery of the **American** people, on the other. There is no room for neutrality. There is no possibility of mistake. There is no way of escape. There is no middle ground. There is no alternative. If the nation is to be saved, it must be saved by exertions which nothing but a crisis like the present, could have called forth; by discoveries which nothing short of the scenes of Cincinnati could have revealed.

Be assured, dear brethren, no occurrences have hitherto taken place (not even in our own city, where the violence of our enemies has most gloriously strengthened us) so directly calculated to convince the hard-yeomanry of central New York, and we may add, of the middle and eastern states, that their own interests and liberties are identified with those of the slave—that **American** freedom is no longer a question of geography or of *color*—that **AMERICANS MUST BECOME ABOLITIONISTS OR SLAVES**, as the occurrences of the last few days in Cincinnati indicate. Previous occurrences had given them reason to suspect it. Now, they see, they feel, they understand, they know it. They have now stood by, while freedom has not only been threatened, but prostrated—while the aristocracy have not only abetted, but consummated the deed, in open daylight with their own hands. The husbandman has rested upon his scythe—the mechanic has let fall the implement of his honest toil, to listen to the story. By thousands and scores of thousands will they now come up

to the rescue, in whose ears the warning words of abolitionists have heretofore been an idle tale.

Permit us to add that the well known character of the press and editor, that in this instance have fallen under the proscriptive ban, the universal meed of approbation, for candor, courtesy, and kindness, that has been awarded them from all parties—from opponents as well as friends, enhances in no small degree, the moral force and virtue of the demonstration that has now been made. Nothing else could so completely have dissipated the illusion hitherto floating before the vision of so many well disposed and intelligent, but misinformed men, that it must have been owing to some undue asperity of manner, some lack of sound judgment or discretion, some want of christian prudence and circumspection, on the part of those who plead for the inalienable rights of man, that they have been so often and so violently assailed, and that, too, by persons professing godliness. Henceforth, the true secret of all the ruffian-like commotion that has disturbed the nation cannot fail to be understood. It will be traced to its proper parent—**SLAVERY!** It will be seen that there is no mildness, or gentleness, or wisdom, that can effectually remove this monster of iniquity, without rousing all the bitterness and rage of the pit.

Above all—this *last* act has wound up the drama—it has matured the crisis. The half-heeded prophecy of yesterday, has become history. **A FREE STATE HAS FALLEN BEFORE THE JUGGERNAUT OF SLAVERY!!!** *Ohio is despoiled of her glory!* The star of her liberty is trampled in the mire. The Constitution is trodden down in her own streets. Her statutes are given to the winds. Her citizens hold their possessions, and exist, and speak, at the mercy and at the discretion of **THEIR SELF-MADE DICTATORS!** A crisis like this, *must* and *will*



be a decisive one. It must prove the grave or the cradle of freedom. Its parallel is not found in the history of our republic. The citizens of Ohio will say—and cannot avoid saying—whether they will swear fealty to their conquerors, or whether they will burst their fetters. On one side or on the other of this question, they *must* speak. Their silence, if they remain silent—*will* speak, and speak the requiem of their liberties! But silent they *cannot* be!

You see, then, dear brethren, the high vantage ground upon which your enemies have placed you! You occupy a position which will be defended by every citizen of Ohio, who does not consent, himself, to become a slave! From this position you cannot be driven, but by the blow that shall drive every free citizen of Ohio along with you. Your right to plead, in Ohio, for the slave, (and on any portion of her soil you shall choose) is a right which, as a matter of fact, is now *found to stand or fall*, with the right of every citizen of Ohio to his own freedom!

On a vantage ground like this, dear brethren, we are persuaded you will not think of laying down your arms. We should wrong you by the implication that you could ever consent to do this, on any ground within the universe of God. Let us rather say, that on a ground like this, you should hasten to enlarge your borders, and strengthen your stakes. A widening field, and a glorious campaign, we doubt not, dear brethren, is before you. A post of distinguished prominence and dignity, as well as peril, is assigned to you. The fate of this nation—the destiny of posterity—the freedom of unborn millions—the fair fame of America—the hopes of a suffering world—are committed to your trust. The soil you occupy seems marked out by the God of the oppressed, as the last, final Thermopylae of holy freedom upon the earth. The glorious Emancipator of his church and of the world, has seen fit to place you in

the fore front of the battle. Your brethren in tribulation are looking anxiously towards you. Their prayers on your behalf, ascend, day and night, before the DELIVERER OF THE NEEDY. The eyes of the world are upon you. A mighty cloud of unseen witnesses are hovering near you. The chosen representatives and brethren of your risen Saviour—'hungry' for the bread of eternal life—'athirst' for the living fountains of freedom—'sick' with the agonies of 'hope deferred'—and *imprisoned* by the fetters of oppression—stretch out, in silence, their imploring hands towards you. And look! that motto on your banner—'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me'! And, hark! that watchword—'*To him that overcometh*'! Onward, then!—Onward! To the rescue! Quit yourselves like men, and be strong. Put on the whole armor of God, and quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. For Zion's sake, hold not your peace! and for Jerusalem's sake, rest not, until the RIGHTE-  
OUSNESS thereof go forth as brightness—and the EMAN-  
CIPATION thereof as a lamp that burneth.

ALVAN STEWART, Chairman Ex.

Com. N. Y. A. S. S.

CHARLES STUART,  
WM. GOODELL,  
JACOB SNYDER,  
J. C. DeLONG,  
BERIAH GREEN,  
REUBEN HOUGH,  
OLIVER WETMORE,  
AMOS SAVAGE,  
SAMUEL LIGHTBODY,  
GERRIT SMITH.

## OUTRAGE UPON SOUTHERN RIGHTS.

[From the Augusta (Georgia) Sentinel.]

We furnish our readers this morning with a decision which gives an entire new feature to the slave question. It has just been decided by the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, that a Slave carried into that State by his owner, becomes *eo instanti* free ! What think you of that, people of the South ? If a southerner carries a servant or a nurse with him into the State of Massachusetts, the highest judicial tribunal of that State is ready with its writs and processes to wrest that servant from him, and pronounce him a freeman before his face ! And then, as if to add the grossest insult to the deepest injury, we are told that this decision is no interference with the rights of the slaveholder, but that rather, the carrying of a slave into a State which does not tolerate slavery, is an interference with the laws of that State ! People of the South ! Will you sleep forever over your dearest rights ? Are you willing to sustain forever a confederation with States into which you dare not travel with your property, lest that property becomes by law actually confiscated ? Of what value to you is a union which enables those who are in common with yourself, members of that union, to destroy the right of private property, and deprive you of that which is justly yours ?

This is the strongest and boldest step ever yet taken against the rights of the South, and leaves the puny efforts of the abolitionists at an immeasurable distance in the

rear. The abolitionists themselves have thus far asked but little more than the liberty of publishing and distributing what they please on the subject of slavery, (bad enough in all conscience,) but here is a high and powerful court, which sets our negroes free as soon as they can get within its reach. Shall we submit to this? Has it not been enough that we have borne for years with a patience almost amounting to servility, the exactions of the tariff for the benefit of the North? Is it not enough that the coffers of the general government have been filled by southern earnings, to be lavished on those States in the way of appropriations? And must we now submit to have our property taken from us by courts and juries, and be insultingly told such things are no interference beyond our rights?

[From the Boston Courier.]

The above article, Mr. Editor, is copied from the *Augusta (Georgia) Sentinel*. Let the freemen of the North read it, and judge how long they ought to submit to such bullying. This is the legitimate fruit of the abject cringing with which they have received the threats of the southern slaveholders ever since the organization of our government. We suffered ourselves to be frightened out of our rights, by that scare-crow *nullification*, and now we are to have the same bug-bear or that other, *dissolution of the union*, whenever we dare to speak or think for ourselves. Let us throw off this spirit, and meet them face to face on their own ground. Of what have they to complain in the late decision of our Supreme Court? And of what have we not to complain in their course of conduct to us? We would ask this writer, by what authority he would dare to bring into this State 'a servant or a nurse,' bearing all the outward marks of being a man, a *free* man, and claim to use him as *cattle*, in the very presence of the majesty of

our laws, which declare that no man can be here held as a slave? What interference is it with the rights of a slaveholder to tell him what he knew before, that we do not tolerate slavery within our borders? Talk of sleeping over your dearest rights! Have you no right that is dearer to you, have you none that you value more than the privilege of obliging a fellow-man to work for you? Is the very *dearest* right of the magnanimous South, so intimately connected with the love of dollars and cents, with which they reproach the North—the right to have their lands cultivated a little more cheaply than they would otherwise—the right to steal the labor of the slave without paying for it? Admit that our Court was wrong in compelling that man to give up his slave; how much does it wrong him?—it does not insult, it does not injure his person; it merely renders his wealth something less; it only diminishes his property. Look, on the contrary, to southern justice as exhibited towards the North. If a merchant of Boston should send out in his vessel a black man to the South, the moment that he arrives on their shores, he is seized and imprisoned, and so kept until the departure of the vessel. This involves only the loss of the services of his servant, perhaps the most important agent on board of the vessel, to the merchant, but what right is there of the servant that it does not interfere with? It takes away his liberty; it makes a freeman, valuing his freedom as much as the most chivalrous and magnanimous southerner of them all, a slave. It refuses him the right of trial by jury guaranteed to him by the constitution of the United States. Nay, more; it is declaring war upon the State to which he belongs; for by the constitution of the United States, the citizens of each State have a title to all their privileges in every other State; it is nullification itself. How small does this pretended outrage on Southern rights appear,

when compared with this manifest outrage on Northern rights ! And even this, bad as it appears, is not the greatest extent to which they go. If a black man is found in some of the slaveholding States, let him have been ever so free at home, he is imprisoned until he can prove himself a freeman ; and if it takes a long time to do this, to prove this negative, he is *sold* to pay the expenses of his confinement. Thus to be free is a crime. Language has not power to express the abhorrence, every son of the North, be he black or white, ought to feel at this insult and outrage. And yet the same men who can be coolly guilty of these crimes, crimes which between nations and states, entirely independent of each other, would be just and righteous causes of war to extermination, prate of their 'patience almost amounting to servility,' and their long suffering endurance exercised towards the North. Freemen of the North, throw back to them the insulting question. Are we willing forever to sustain a confederation with states, into which our free citizens dare not travel, for fear, not of losing property merely, but liberty itself ? Of what value to us is a union which enables those who are, in common with ourselves, members of that union, to destroy not only the right of private property, but of freedom ? Put to them these questions. Do you desire a dissolution of the union ? Suppose we grasp at it with joy, and become nations entirely independent of each other. Now what would be the consequence, if you should pursue your present course ? Would you then dare to imprison an innocent citizen of the North without trial ? to sell him for a slave to pay his jail expenses ? Would you dare to insult, to scourge, to murder our free citizens travelling within your borders, merely because you suspected them of holding opinions different from your own, as you have repeatedly done within a few years past ? No,

you would not dare, unless you were prepared to make war at once. It would need the tears and blood of the whole South to atone for one single instance of these aggressions. Common causes for war sink into insignificance compared with these. Weigh well, then, the consequences, before you demand a dissolution. Who would shield you from massacre by your slaves or the Indians? Who would protect you from foreign aggression or internal dissension? From whom would you receive the numberless benefits for which you are now indebted to the North? We forbear to press the subject further. Reflect, before you demand a dissolution of the Union, that you have almost everything, we have almost nothing, to lose. Do not cry too loud, lest you should be heard and answered as you do not expect. Remember the maxim, 'Never spur a willing horse.'